SHADOWRUN

THE COMPLETE TROG

CATALYST game labs

RUNNER RESOURCES

THE COMPLETE TROG

CATALYST game labs™

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Lake Stevens, WA 98258

Find us online:
info@shadowruntabletop.com
(*Shadowrun* questions)
http://www.shadowruntabletop.com
(Catalyst *Shadowrun* website)
http://www.shadowrun.com
(official *Shadowrun Universe* website)
http://www.catalystgamelabs.com
(Catalyst website)
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INTRODUCTION

You say "trog" because you want to get attention. You want to be noticed, and not in a good way. You want to get a reaction. You want to make people angry. The word is there to make people hurt.

That's why trogs are taking it back. Will it make people angry? Great. They're not interested in keeping people happy, only in increasing justice. Is it insulting? Fine. Orks and trolls will apply the name to themselves and dare you to come up with something worse. Think it's your word? Not anymore.

The Complete Trog is a detailed guide to how orks and trolls live in the Sixth World and work to claim their piece of it, facing all the obstacles that every Sixth World resident confronts as well as plenty that are particular to them. The book provides the inside information about the people, places, and organizations that shape the lives of orks and trolls, with tips and advice about how to make the right friends and avoid the worst enemies.

The book begins with *What Are You?*, detailing how orks and trolls live at the end of the 2070s and the roots of trog pride. *Living as a Trog in ...* provides information on several locales across the world, from those that are dominated by or supportive of trogs to those that any trog would move away from if they could afford it. Following on that idea, *Working as a Trog in ...* covers some of the major corporations in the world and how they treat the trogs that work for them, either as regular employees or shadowrunners.

Then the book shifts to some of the people and organizations that can affect ork and troll lives. *Trog Heroes* looks at some of the orks and trolls who have risen to positions of prominence in the world, gathering power and influence in ways that can advance trog rights and prosperity. On the other side of the coin are *Trog Enemies*, the people and groups who have some massive problems with orks and trolls and are engaged in all kinds of work to make them miserable. The resistance to these groups does not have to be an individual effort; *United We Stomp* looks at some of the ork- and troll-centric societies that have emerged to help trogs build strength in numbers and counter some of the attacks that the world seems to regularly throw their direction.

Finally, *Everything Trog* presents gear, qualities, and Life Modules that are focused on orks and trolls, providing more character options and ways to make distinctive and unique trog characters.

With this information, orks and trolls will be better equipped to march their way headlong into the forces aligned against them. They don't have to hide, they don't have to shrink back. Being a trog is no longer about being ashamed or pushed into the shadows. It's about being better than people think you are and making sure they know it.

Even the people who use "trog" as an insult know that orks and trolls are strong. *The Complete Trog* shows the full range of that strength and helps players and gamemasters fill the Sixth World with richer ork and troll characters—and plenty of shadow work, since each chapter is full of plot hooks.

Jump in and feel the trog pride!

THE COMPLETE TROG CREDITS

Writing: David Ellenberger, Jason M. Hardy, James Meiers, Scott Schletz, C.Z. Wright

Editing: R.L. King

Art Direction: Brent Evans

Cover Art: Victor Manuel Leza Moreno

Original Cover Art: Victor Moreno

Cover Layout: Matt "Shaken Steak" Heerdt

Iconography: Nigel Sade

Interior Art: Andreas "AAS" Scroth, Benjamin Giletti, Bruno Balixa, Echo Chernik, Celeste Hansen, Daniel Reneau, Donald Crank, James Mosingo, Kristen Plescow, Phil Hilliker, Rob Ruffolo, Victor Manuel Leza Moreno, Victor Perez Corbella, Gordon Bennetto, Tony Shasteen

Interior Layout: Matt "Shaken Steak" Heerdt

Shadowrun Line Developer: Jason M. Hardy

Playtesting & Proofing: Chuck Burhanna, Raymond Croteau, Bruce Ford, Mason Hart, Francis Jose, David Dashifen Keys, Robert Price

JACKPOINT

CONNECTING TO JACKPOINT VPN...
...IDENTITY SPOOFED
...ENCRYPTION KEYS GENERATED
...CONNECTED TO ONION ROUTERS

>>>LOGIN: XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
>>>ENTER PASSCODE: XXXXXXXXXXXXXX
...BIOMETRIC SCAN CONFIRMED
YOU'RE IN. USE IT WELL.

"TO HOLD A PEOPLE IN OPPRESSION, YOU HAVE TO CONVINCE THEM FIRST THAT THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO BE OPPRESSED." -JOHN HENRIK CLARKE

JACKPOINT STATS

Interaction rate: +31%

Posts per hour: -2%

Today's content quality (signal:noise): 7:6

93 Users are active

LATEST NEWS

- There is a mob within one kilometer of your current location. It is unclear if they are angry or not.

PERSONAL ALERTS

- You have 18 new private messages.
- You have 20 new responses to your JackPoint posts.
- The transcript of CrimeTime's Hall of Fame induction speech is downloaded and ready to read.

There are 7 members online and in your area.

Your current rep score: 765 (68% Positive)

Current Time: 17 Aug 2079, 0858 hrs

WELCOME BACK TO JACKPOINT, CHUMMER:

Your last connection was severed 10 hours, 33 minutes, and 28 seconds ago.

TODAY'S HEADS UP

- JackPoint has set a record for most suspensions in a day. Don't irritate me any more.—Glitch

INCOMING

- Fight for your life long enough, and you end up in Seattle. Weird. [Tag: Seattle Gambit]
- You had me at a "warhammer that shoots bullets." [Tag: Street Lethal]
- The world doesn't have enough good guys. Time to apply for that hero job. [Tag: Better than Bad]

TOP NEWS ITEMS

- Ghostwalker condemned by CAS, UCAS, PCC, and Sioux Nation. He issues a statement of "extreme lack of caring." Link
- UCAS Congress abruptly shuts down FBI investigation of reputed secretive land purchases in DeeCee, citing lack of evidence of anything criminal. Link
- Detroit presents lavish incentive package to Ares to rebuild corp headquarters in the city; Ares response muted. Link

TRANSCRIPT OF CRIMETIME'S ROCK & ROLL HALL OF FAME INDUCTION SPEECH

Thank you. Thank you. I really appreciate this. I know it may not sound like it, but I do. That's just my voice. Not built to sound happy, you know? But I am. I appreciate you letting me in to this hall of fame. Hell, I appreciate you letting me into the damn building in the first place.

<mild laughter>

No really, I wasn't sure I was going to get in. I thought I dressed pretty mild, thought I didn't look threatening, but I still seen some of those security guards scoping me up and down, and getting nervous the longer they looked. They glanced at each other, and I could practically hear their thoughts, I could hear them, and they were saying to themselves, "This trog motherfucker really supposed to be here?"

<gasps>

Oh, what, did I say something wrong? Tell me this—which word didn't you like? You don't want me cursing? Fine, I can do that. But was it the other word? Was it "trog?" Yeah, that was the one. Weren't expecting to hear someone say that, were you? Well, I can say it. It's my word. Our word. I can say it when I want. The rest of you—no. Not yours. Those of you who weren't saying it before, you keep on not saying it. And there's some of you out there who keep saying it and shouldn't be. You shouldn't. It's not yours, so you should stop. Me, I'll say it whenever I want.

But I got off track. The bouncers, they let me in even though they were suspicious, and I'm grateful. Because I didn't always get into places, right? That's how it is for all of us, when we were young and struggling, we tried to get in places and play shows, and we couldn't always get in. And that's all right. If I can't attract ten thousand people to my show, I shouldn't be playing no stadiums, and I got that. That's cool.

But that's not the only thing that keeps us out, neh? There were times, when I was young, I could play a club that didn't have no fire systems or even a good floor, a place that might collapse at any minute, and I could draw hundreds. Hundreds! I could pack the place. Then I'd go to some of the other places, the places that were, you know, up to code, and I'd try to play, and they'd say no. No, don't play here. You want to know what they told me? You want to know what they'd say? They'd say the insurance was too high. That's what they'd say. They'd give themselves cover that way, make it sound like it's out of their hands. We'd love to have you play. Insurance is just too damn high.

Why is it too high? Because people out there think that you get a bunch of trogs together, we gonna break stuff. That's it. So you keep us out of the nice spots, you keep us down, because you think we're not civilized enough to let in. I could draw five hundred people and make fifty nuyen, while some nice elf girl with a guitar gets two hundred people in a good spot and gets paid three hundred nuyen. And then you wonder why we seem so angry.

But I'm not angry. I'm here. You let me in. And I'm grateful, I'm truly am. What I want to tell you, though, is that there are so many other great ones out there. Young kids, with big tusks and thick horns, and they are laying out their pain and their joys in ways you never heard before. They are making music you can't imagine, because they are living lives you can't imagine. It's amazing stuff, man. It'll blow your mind. But first you gotta hear it. So stop making excuses. Stop being scared. You go out there when this is over and remember that CrimeTime said something simple. He said let them in. Just like you let me in here. You got nothing to lose and everything to gain. Listen to them. Let them in.

BELINDA

Arthur ground his teeth together and imagined how this douchebag's single silver tusk would weather a solid punch. The fingers of his right hand twitched instinctively to form a fist, and his hand blazed with pain. His autoinjectors hadn't kicked in—they must have been damaged during the fight that broke his hand—which meant no painkillers. He growled in aggravation and pain.

The douchebag, a well-dressed ork, grinned at Arthur's growl, and his tusk flashed scarlet with the nearby stoplight's reflection. "This is going to go one of two ways." He clasped his manicured hands together. "One, you cooperate with us. We go down to meet Mr. Theo like a big, happy family. He pays you the money he owes you—"

Arthur wiped his left hand over the sanded-down stubs of his horns and punched his fist into his thigh. "Enough! Stop talking! Where is she?"

"I'm sorry, what now?""

"You trashed my place after I figured out that your boss is a double-crossing piece of drek!"

Silvertusk looked askance at his associate. An eyepatch that glowed with the All-Seeing Eye in shifting colors covered one of her eyes, and she stared into space with the other. If her apathy concerned Silvertusk, he didn't show it. "No worries," Silvertusk patted the air, his tone of voice melting to honey. "No worries, chummer. Mr. Theo will give you your money—and your girl. We'll go our separate ways, and never the two shall ever meet again, et cetera." He held his hands out like a pair of scales. He took a deep breath and lowered one hand. "Or—"

A popping sound drifted from Arthur's jaw as teeth-grinding turned to jaw-clenching. His tusks pricked his lip, and he tasted copper. Theodosius, his fixer, paired him with a new team for a personal mission, he'd said. However, when security showed up exactly when and where they were supposed to deliver their package, he knew it was no coincidence. Arthur barely escaped, and when he got home, he found his place trashed. Blind with rage, Arthur had gone for his spare Ruger to chase after them—he had lost his original in the fight that broke his hand—but they'd taken it. Then his gaze had landed on the door: hanging open, half off its hinges. Belinda was gone. Arthur shook with rage at the memory.

"—if it does happen that way, then things will go a little differently. We'll beat you bloody, maybe there'll be some gunplay. But however we play, I'm sure it will be exciting. We won't do it here in beautiful Downtown. We'll need to go somewhere less ..." He pondered theatrically, "... sensitive to violence than Downtown."

Arthur glared at Silvertusk, ignoring the theatrics and lost in thoughts of the impact of fist on face, the crunch, the spit

BY C2 WRIGHT

flying ... his hand twitched again, and pain shot up his arm.

Silvertusk jabbed a thick finger at Arthur, snapping him out of his daydream. "But one thing will remain the same, no matter how you choose. Can you guess what it is?"

Arthur locked eyes with him.

Silvertusk shouted in response to his silence. "You're entirely wrong, son!" He darted close, and his voice fell to a hush. His breath was sharp. "What will remain the same is the fact that, like it or not, we are all going to meet with Mr. Theo. Just as you'd agreed. Just like professionals." He leaned closer, whispering, "Just consider whether you'd like to be a willing—"

Arthur smashed his head into Silvertusk's nose.

Eyepatch bolted upright unnervingly fast and shoved her open palm toward Arthur. With a soft thup, a projectile burst out of her palm, and a small, silicone-fletched dart stuck into his armored vest. Silvertusk fell backward onto his ass, and blood gushed from his nose. The gunshot tripped sensors in a nearby light post; a red light flared from the top of the pole, and a siren shrieked to life.

Arthur glanced down at the dart, up at the flashing light, and bolted. If there were gunshot sensors here, there would be police crawling all over here in no time. Plus, he didn't want to stick around to discover what was in those darts. If he could get to the street market on the far side of Downtown, he stood a chance to lose them. He switched his wired reflexes on and zig-zagged for a few city blocks before risking a glance over his shoulder. Eyepatch was quick—and too close. Silvertusk struggled to keep up, blood falling from his nose onto the front of his shirt. Arthur saw no sign of the police.

Eyepatch raised her hand toward him, and Arthur sprinted around a corner. A patrol car emerged from an alleyway directly in his path. He couldn't stop and half-flew, half-rolled across the hood and sprawled off the other side of the car, leaving behind an extensive series of dents.

Eyepatch slipped around the car like water and barked a laugh before disappearing around the nearest corner. "Lying around won't get her back, chummer!"

Enraged and panicked at the ease with which he could have just been shot, Arthur roared and kicked a deep dent in the driver-side door. Someone inside the car swore, and the driver-side door jostled violently but did not open. He scrambled to his feet just in time to see a police officer emerge from the passenger side. The elf aimed at Arthur and yelled at him to freeze. Silvertusk, wiping at his face, rounded the corner and collided into the officer's back.

Arthur took his chance to disappear around the nearest corner. The sounds of their fight faded as Arthur hurried away.

He zig-zagged for a few blocks and kept careful watch for Eyepatch or the police. Not running—no one trusted a running troll—but hurrying. He switched off his wired reflexes, just in case.

Downtowners unaccustomed to anxious trolls in their midst, running or stationary, began to pay more attention to Arthur. He crossed the street abruptly and headed toward the back side of a shopping center, where he hoped to put some distance between him and the cops with fewer curious eyes on him.

Something flashed past him, and he heard a small thwack, making him start. It took him a step to realize two things. First, he'd just been shot—he caught sight of a dart waggling from the strap of his vest—and second, his mistake: a long, unbroken row of stores walled him in on the left; a high fence ran the length of the shopping center to his right. He was penned in. Because he'd lost his pack of gear mid-flight from the job, he had no hope of scaling that fence. He activated his wired reflexes and broke into a run.

Another dart struck his boot heel. Luck wouldn't last forever, but it at least lasted until now. He crashed through the closest door and burst into a fabric store. The lone employee dashed into an office and slammed the door, probably to call the cops. Arthur hurried through the cramped aisles toward the open front doorway, but the thick dermal deposits of his bare arms snagged the loose ends of brightly colored fabric and yanked the bolts of cloth from the shelves. Arthur stormed ahead, distracted as he tried to rip material from his arms and avoid tripping as the bolts unfurled like banners.

Out on the sidewalk, a dwarf holding a spray bottle and a rag screamed as Arthur exploded through the freshly cleaned, practically invisible glass door and fell on the sidewalk. Eyepatch hopped through the hole in the front door, smiled pleasantly at the dwarf, and shot a dart into Arthur's arm.

Arthur flung the dart away, struggled to his feet, and sprinted for an alley across the street, leaving torn fabric and glass shards in his wake. A few long strides into a narrow alleyway, and Arthur could feel the chemical working on him. "No!" He stumbled and fell to the oil-spattered pavement

Quick, light footsteps approached, and Eyepatch appeared in his line of sight, speaking quietly into a comm. "I need a pickup. Abe got himself arrested, and I don't have the keys."

She clicked the call off, peered over Arthur, and grinned. "You ever stop to think maybe you'd get more done if you weren't raging all the time? I mean, it was a fun chase and all, but we could've settled this earlier—"

The drug snaked its way through Arthur's bloodstream. Arthur strained and panted as he held his head up to look at her. "Where ... is she?!"

Eyepatch snorted a laugh and shook her head. "You're gonna burn out like a headlight, pal."

Arthur's head fell back with a bounce. He passed out to the crunch of glass.

Arthur's eyes flew open, and his heart hammered in his chest. His thoughts struggled to gain traction on the slippery battlefield of stimulants versus Narcoject. It was dark. He could hear a murmur of conversation somewhere ahead of him, and shushing sounds all around. He lay on his left side.

The rush bounding through him slowly started to fade but had little effect on the pain scalding up his arm from each movement of the couch. He realized that he lay on the bench seat of a moving vehicle. The shushing sound came from passing tires on pavement. Bonds lashed his arms—he hissed a breath at the white, blinding pain when he tried to move them—and his ankles. He caught his breath and gently tested the bond at his ankles; whatever they'd tied him with grudgingly found its elasticity under pressure.

The conversation originated from the seat in front of him. Whether there were more seats—and more people—ahead of that, he didn't know, but it sounded in a smaller space. The elasticity of his bonds told him they hadn't expected him to wake up. The rush that woke him suggested his wonky autoinjectors had kicked in, but because he had no AR feed—they must have grabbed his comm—he couldn't say for certain. Somewhere in the far distance, a sonorous horn called. The horn announced the last ferry and meant the hour was late, and based on its direction, this vehicle was headed out of town.

One of the voices grew loud enough to understand. "... last thing I need! And just see if he doesn't come crawling back to me once he's out."

Arthur recognized Mr. Theo's voice.

Rage boiled over. Arthur curled up and slammed his feet into the seat in front of him. The vehicle swerved, throwing Arthur from one side to the other. The seat dropped out from under him; they were airborne. A quarter-second later, they were rolling. He screamed as his hand smacked into something mid-fall. Inertia threw Arthur down on the seat, flung him into the ceiling, and plastered him against the side door. Metal groaned, glass crunched, and the vehicle slammed to a stop.

Thin light swam through the dust and the thick spider-webbing that was the broken windshield. Arthur's head spun. His arm shaking, he pulled his hand up to assess the damage. From the back of his hand, several of his bones stuck up at a thirty-something-degree angle. Fibers of aluminum bone lacing stuck out from the bones; a few shards of bone rotated freely on the thin aluminum threads. He cradled his mangled hand to his torso and tried to avoid looking at it.

He snapped the bond at his ankles. He wanted to pull his wrists apart, but the hot, ringing pain wouldn't allow it. A groan and a cough floated on the dust from not far away. With effort, he sat up in the crushed vehicle. Eyepatch was unconscious in the driver's seat, blood trickling down her face. Mr. Theo crawled out the side window. Arthur dove forward and clawed for his leg, but missed. Arthur kicked viciously at the door until he made a hole large enough for him to clamber out into the night after him.

As Arthur scrambled to his feet, Mr. Theo tugged his jacket straight and smoothed his silver hair on the other side of the

smoking wreck of a cheap SUV. The weak light glinted off his polished horns. "I knew something like this would happen!"

"Where is she?!" Arthur roared. Then he rushed the troll.

Mr. Theo flicked his hand toward Arthur, a small motion. A visible magical force coalesced around Arthur and engulfed him. A sound like a muffled exploding firework blasted all around him, and the magical power spat him out. He flew through the air and landed on his back, his ears ringing. The fall sent up a cloud of dust and kicked the breath from his lungs.

Mr. Theo glared down at Arthur, who gasped for air on the ground, sending clouds into the cold night. "Against my better judgment, I hired you for this mission. Nothing negative cropped up in your background check, you'd performed well so far, and I mistakenly assumed from this that you wouldn't be a problem. Maybe the rest of your team kept you on a leash." He spat a gob of blood on the ground. "Now that I see you in action, I realize: You're green as grass.

"Your job was simple. But you fought with security, and your team got arrested." He squared off and glowered down his nose at Arthur. "And who is to blame for picking a fight on the job? The mild-mannered human? The taciturn elf? Or would you instead blame the ill-tempered, raging, maniac tusker"—he spat the word—"who gives all trolls a bad name?" He growled. "I know who I'd pick."

He held his hands open, side by side before him, then pulled his hands apart and his palms up in two sharp moves. As Mr. Theo's hands lifted, a magical ocean wave broke in the heavy shadows underneath Arthur, and black, rising froth jolted him into the air. Blood flowed from Mr. Theo's nose, and he wiped it impatiently with the back of a hand, smearing blood across his mouth.

Arthur struggled, but the break roiled beneath and kept him a quarter-meter from the ground.

"You listen to me, and you listen well," Mr. Theo stepped closer and sneered, displaying bloodied teeth and tusks. "In my business, you behave with manners. I was willing to pay you everything I negotiated with your team if it would keep you off my back. Plus, if you made it out of that, I figured, you deserved it. But I will not be forced to watch my back just because you choose to behave like a typical, low-life *trog*!"

Mr. Theo turned away and wiped the blood from his face with a handkerchief. He muttered to himself as he drew Arthur's Ruger from his breast pocket, "You see something you don't like, and you lose control and turn into a complete, raging lunatic."

The crunch of something heavy on the ground and a change in his levitation spell made Mr. Theo turn just in time for Arthur to land a roundhouse kick to his face with a scream like a lunatic's.

A few minutes later, Mr. Theo's head lolled as he regained his senses. His jaw worked on a tight gag of brightly colored fabric. Another wide strip of cloth blindfolded him.

Light from the headlights—a pair of dust-filled beams that pierced the darkness, askew and too close to the ground—cast Arthur's hulking silhouette over Mr. Theo, who sat in the dirt with his arms tied behind his back. Arthur slipped his re-acquired commlink into his pocket. "I'm glad you're awake. Hold very still. I've only got one good hand." Arthur nicked the gag with his knife, and with a sharp tug, pulled it free of Mr. Theo's tusks. "Now: Tell me where she is."

Mr. Theo's mouth worked before he spoke. "For Ghost's sake, where is who?"

Arthur shook his head. "Wrong answer."

"I don't know who 'she' is, you—" He stopped short. His nostrils flared, and his mouth hung open. "Wait. Are you talking about your fucking hamster?"

Arthur's knuckles turned white around the knife hilt when an AR message from his landlord chirruped and flashed to life in his field of vision, just as it was programmed ever since he missed his rent payment three months ago.

Found your Belinda in my cupboard. You owe me a box of Crunchy Soy-O's. Come get her before tomorrow, or I'm having gerbil stew for breakfast.

Arthur's thoughts swirled in a maelstrom, and he ached for the control of action: to break bones, crumple them beneath his fist, give in to the urge to rend, smash, and punch, teeth bared, heart galloping, blood coursing ... a rumble shook his throat and exploded into a roar. "She's a chinchilla!"

There was a small click, and the headlights burned out, plunging them into inky darkness.

You're gonna burn out like a headlight, pal.

Arthur froze, panting. Cold realization crackled through him. He had started this whole mess when he overlooked Belinda. What if, lost in rage, he'd stepped on her? His wide eyes took in the dark shapes of his bloodied fixer and the wrecked SUV. Where would breaking Mr. Theo leave Arthur? Without a fixer, with his brand-new team still in the can, without income, and with a new home out on the street for him and Belinda. Maybe he wouldn't even be able to care for her anymore!

A fresh idea flowed through the cracks in his obstinacy. He returned the knife to its sheath and glared down his arm, extending a finger at Mr. Theo's face. "I'll make you a deal," he said in fierce, measured tones, "I won't try to kill you if you agree that you need a new bodyguard." He dropped his arm and narrowed his eyes. "Maybe I'll even pick up some manners."

Arthur hummed the second verse to Nerve Tonic's latest hit. Thanks to Mr. Theo's VIP box tickets, he had been able to catch the sold-out opener of their thirtieth anniversary tour. And all Arthur had to do was wear an expensive suit and look intimidating. He held up the screwdriver like a microphone for the chorus, and when the melody dropped into the bridge, he turned the tool back to tightening the screws of Belinda's new (and very expensive) Deluxe WallCrawler Tunnel Set.

WHAT ARE YOU?

- I had a long and interesting discussion recently with a friend of a friend. After our conversation, she asked me if I could get guest access for her and her sister to run something past you all for the sake of "thoughtful inquiry." (Her words, not mine)

  Play nice. This is bound to ruffle a few feathers.
- 2XL

- Thanks. My sister (Lilith) and I recently moved out of the house. It wasn't our blood parents' house, it was our sort-of adoptive father's place. We grew up there, having moved in maybe twelve years ago. He's eccentric, but down-to-earth at the same time—let's just keep it at "he's weird, and it's a weird relationship we have." I'm not giving much more info than that to protect his privacy, but just keep in mind that he is not what I'd call typical.

  He sent us a letter recently. A multiple-page handwritten letter on paper with ink. (It was crazy— I think it must be some kind of end-of-life exercise mingled with a romantic nostalgia for a period he never experienced. My sister thinks he's just an old-fashioned weirdo.) I had to dictate it to put it up here, because I wasn't going to abuse you with scans of his handwriting. Regardless, in the letter he made a few points on which my sister and I, ahem, *vehemently* disagree. I won't tell you which of us thinks what, but instead, I'll take my inspiration from him and wait to know your thoughts first.
- Chiron

Surprise! I'll admit that I would love to see the looks on your faces when that courier dropped off a thick envelope. Tell me what you thought it was! Jury duty? A summons? Some eccentric relative willed you a bunch of cash? Ha ha!

I'm finding it difficult to believe the two of you are adults. In lieu of a long heart-to-heart, which I know for a fact would bore you to drink, I settled on this letter. I know: paper and ink, absolutely shocking. You've known I was old-fashioned since you moved in, so let's not get hung up on details.

Here's the gist of this letter, and if you take nothing else away from this packet of paper, please take this: You are fantastic kids, I've had an absolute blast witnessing you grow into adults, I love you guys, and it's been my pleasure to be your dad. Don't ever forget that.

Now, that said, I've also seen you do and say some questionable things in recent months.

- Ooo, "questionable." Sounds kinky.
- Slamm-0!

I'd like to see if I can help straighten your perspective regarding history and your place in it. I feel as though I owe you the help you'll need as you step out into the world. I'll see if I can pass along some things I've learned over the years—maybe some things you and I share perhaps more in common than the rest of the kids. Maybe I'm just a blowhard. I'll leave it up to you to decide. Why do I even need to write to you? I'm rambling.

Basically, you've learned so much since you arrived and I'm pleased with how you conduct yourselves most of the time, but I felt there were still a few points I could pass along. Things no one told me; things I had to figure out for myself.

First, I should give you a little background: I'm what you'd call a second-generation ork. I was born in 2035 to a pair of loving humans. They were surprised, I think, to learn that their baby boy—on whose conception, gestation, and birth they'd spent at least a year's salary in medical treatments—showed up an ork, but they were determined to "get it right." I guess I'll leave it up to you to determine whether they were successful.

- "They were determined to get it right." What is that supposed to mean?
- Butch

- Make sure their sweet little bundle-o-tusks was going to grow up on the right side of the beltway?
- Baka Dabora

- I've got a feeling it's not that simple. And that fact heartens and pisses me off in equal measure.
- 2XL

They spent a good chunk of cash to have me, and they continued to spend money on my upbringing. And yes, I am well aware that I am *unbelievably* lucky. I never wanted for shelter, sustenance, medical care, attention, or love. Some say that leaves me unqualified to discuss this subject matter with you. I say I'm uniquely qualified: where some of my peers grew up in unstable homes, with unstable people, or just with unstable finances, I did not. I grew up with a self-assurance of the promise of prosperity in exchange for honest hard work, a healthy respect for law and order, trust, self-confidence (or what I thought was self-confidence at the time), book smarts, and a yawning ignorance of how the world really worked.

After an amazing progression through school, with both moms drilling me on their pet subjects every chance they got (did I mention one was a marine biologist and the other's an herbalist?), I went to med school. The rest is history.

- Right there! See what he's doing? "The rest is history," like, "pay no attention to these last twenty years behind the curtain!"
- Lilith

- So much for keeping our opinions secret to the end.
- Chiron

- I'm not sorry.
- Lilith

You haven't had to deal much with some of the problems my peers had to deal with. And when I say "peers," keep in mind that would, generationally speaking, include your parents. I'm not saying you've had it easy; we all know that would be a lie, but I think it's worthwhile to hear a little history put into perspective. Keep in mind, this is all speculation. I didn't know your parents or grandparents any better than you did.

In 2021, ten percent of the population transformed, suddenly and painfully, into trolls and orks.

When I look at a human and think of his skeletal structure, sometimes I try to imagine shifting from his structure to mine—not even to a troll's, but just to an ork's—over the course of a few moments, and I'm blown away by how painful it must have been. And it hit you at home, on the job, at school—in front of your friends and family and strangers. Everyone was human back then, and to everyone else's eyes, one in every ten people suddenly ballooned—mutated—into creatures they equated with the villains and monsters in their fairy stories.

I don't like to use this kind of language when talking about our genetic ancestry, but I want to put this into the perspective that governed people back then. No one knew what to make of it and most people reacted poorly. They called it goblinization; they also called it a disease and a plague. They quarantined the newly goblinized and locked them away in camps and prisons with subpar facilities.

- Your father has a talent for understatement. In my vocabulary, "subpar" facilities might refer to a place that lacks a soy-flavoring unit in the kitchen. According to a friend, the conditions he's talking about here was something more like trying to house ten trolls to a space the size of a four-human jail cell, with only cardboard to sleep on. My word for that is "barbaric."
- Mihoshi Oni

- Don't forget the fact that there was no food for days, and what they gave you was fragging molding. The ones locking you up would have preferred you die; it meant more supplies to cover the rest of the unwanted. Drek, some of your fellow campmates might have preferred you die, too; it meant more food and room for the rest of them.
- Butch

They stripped people of their rights and personhood. People started to riot.

It took them a little over a year to discover goblinization wasn't contagious, but months later, investigators found metahuman body parts underneath the Johns Hopkins Institute of Health. There were signs of torture; they said it was like walking into a dungeon. In under a year, we'd attacked, subjugated, and dissected our fellow people, solely based on their appearance.

Trolls and orks were a new "other" for us to deal with, and we didn't deal well. There was a well-publicized incident when a boy goblinized at school and wasn't allowed back in afterward. The school board eventually fined the parents for failing to school the kid. Absolutely ridiculous drek. It was, thankfully, a bloodless demonstration, but it shows you how they still viewed us as subhuman.

- Do you think this was taught in the schools? Of course it wasn't. Disgraceful.
- Axis Mundi

- I had a human friend who told me back in the day he watched a group of shoppers freak out when a woman goblinized in the checkout lane. In the middle of a packed store, in broad daylight, people completely flipped out. She died after someone threw a brick and it caught her in the head. It really messed my friend up to watch it, he said.
- Respec

- Anyone else notice how this always comes back around to humans? "Sub-human," "meta-human." Always either a comparison to humans or how it affects them.
- 2XL

- They say racism is dead. Don't believe a word of it.
- Butch

- Cool it. He was all of five years old at the time.
- Respec

After eighteen years, this new batch of racism was all grown up and now a fully functioning social disease. In 2039, a building wave of assaults and crimes against metahumans crested in the Night of Rage, with riots breaking out across the globe. Thousands died—though the exact number is unclear, both because many metas were not counted as citizens, and so their deaths could be overlooked, and because the rioting crowds couldn't be bothered to track just how many victims their violence was claiming.

- I'm gonna step in here and say this never made any sense to me—the claim that everyone lost their collective drek at once. I've read other threads about this, and no one can point out anything that happened that could have triggered this worldwide protest.
- /dev/grrl

- It's tempting to believe there was coordination or even a global conspiracy behind this, and I'm not going to claim that that some of the anti-meta groups weren't in communication with each other. But sometimes evil is a spontaneous emotion.
- Snopes

In response to the riots that broke out, the Governor of Seattle thought it would be a good idea to round up all the trolls and orks in the city and stash them in warehouses, ostensibly for their own safety. But really so they could keep an eye on them, and also keep them in one place in case the government decided to activate some sort of final solution.

- I've long wondered about what happened that night, so I drew up a chart for Seattle that night. At first I thought Mercury's combust, but there's a big Sun-sized orb there, so that's obviously out. We've got Uranus in the 11th opposing Mars, we've got Mars trine Saturn—Old Man Saturn's using Mars against the eccentrics who've banded together. And that's not even going into Leo in the 12th, the Virgo Ascendant opposing nearly everything else. You know, regal Leo in the house of secrets could easily manifest as superior race themes.
- Chiron

- Stop trying to change the subject.
- Lilith

Naturally, plenty of people didn't want to wait for the government to make up its mind, so they took things into their own hands. A terrorist group called the Hand of Five firebombed the warehouses, and hundreds of people died. The city erupted in riots again.

Chances are good that your parents or your grandparents lived through the Night of Rage and the aftermath. Whether or not they survived the night is a question for which I don't have an answer, but I guarantee you it changed their lives in some way. My moms started homeschooling me after the Night of Rage. At three years old, I wasn't paying much attention to the news, so it didn't affect me much beyond that. But I was one of the luckiest ones.

- Just a reminder for everyone: This wasn't written with the intention of public display.
- Chiron

- What's wrong? Embarrassed for him? It's okay, I am too.
- Lilith

- No, I'm not embarrassed—I don't think there's anything wrong with a safe and happy upbringing—but you've told me your thoughts, and I thought others might share your views.
- Chiron

- Guess we'll find out.
- Lilith

Legal actions peppered throughout the last forty years have brought the extent of the problems to light, even if they haven't done much to curb them.

Since you were born, though, the landscape is drastically different. Or'zet is recognized as an official language. There are kingdoms out there in the world dedicated to orks and trolls. Neither of these existed twenty or thirty years ago. Orks are now, thanks to the genetic disposition to multiple births—and I swear if I hear the word "litter" used within my earshot, I will become violent—the sec-

ond-most common metatype in the world. (As a side note, I've always been envious of people with siblings—I hope you realize how lucky you two are.) Since you've been born, there have been debates that, twenty years ago, I never would have dreamed I'd see, as to who is more of an ork: those who were born orks, or those who were born human and goblinized into an ork (I believe the term they used was "half-ork"). But because the world is so different than we older folks are used to, I think it tends to make us blind to the troubles that *do* affect you.

So, I hereby officially acknowledge that you have seen more than your fair share of troubles. I've heard of the altercations you've had with others, seemingly solely based on your metatype, and no, it's *not* fair. I acknowledge problems remain with our lot in life, and I recognize the precedent that *seems* to justify an aggressive response.

Christianity and Islam pegged us a long time ago under the categories of demons, devils, and other assorted abominations and heretics. Add in the fact that neither of those churches has had much of a soft spot for magic, and even if they aren't quite as damning of us as when we first showed up in the twenties, we are nevertheless profoundly disliked by the faiths. Some of the reawakened faiths out there are more accepting, but I'll admit I never spent much time embroiled in discussions about who hates or tolerates us based on their faith. I probably missed a lot of opportunities to find out exactly who hated me. Ah, if I'd only cared enough to engage.

- As something of a subject matter expert, I can tell you Seattle's a secular city. I simply don't see religion separating Seattle residents as much as the media claims, or as much as it does in other parts of the world.
- Goat Foot

- A metahuman is more likely to get roughed up for being in the wrong part of town than for speaking with someone from a faith that "dislikes" them.
- Traveler Jones

We have to deal with an environment built for smaller people—in some cases, *much* smaller. Ceilings aren't tall enough, doorways aren't wide enough. Chairs break underneath us, we barely fit on the mattress. It's infuriating, it causes injuries, and it's unnecessary. But despite the number of orks and trolls in the world and our collective spending power, you'll only find furniture sized to fit us in a few special places. There are a few spots downtown where you'll find appropriate seating, but expect to pay a few hundred nuyen per plate to dine there. Similarly, if you can find a venue run by an ork or a troll, chances are better that they have the right-sized spots for you to sit, but it's no guarantee. Not everyone can resist the siren call of cheap, particularly when the standing stereotyping leads people to avoid your venue based on trumped-up fears.

I don't have an explanation for you. If you'd like to change things, all I can do is tell you is to either join the government or buy a woodshop and a tutorsoft. I chose the latter and have been comfortable ever since.

Even our biology seems out to get us. We have tusks, which cause extra problems—jaw problems and soft-tissue injuries of the mouth and face come to mind. Horns can split or snap. I've heard of rare cases where the horns curl just so and begin to grow into the scalp. Much worse than an ingrown hair. Dermal deposits can cause skin problems and even injury to others.

The biological difference that gets the most press for orks, though, is our shorter lifespan.

- You know, rumor has it that there was a guy named Harry who was one of the first orks to goblinize in 2023. After he lost his position as Mayor in 2056, he retired to one of the warrens under Puyallup, where he mentored some of the group that would go on to become the Bot'Kham, who frequently referred to him as "grandfather." They were never very forthcoming as to whether this was literal or figurative. Harry finally passed away two years ago, in '77.
- Butch

- Assuming that Harry was really young when he goblinized, that would make him nearly sixty when he died. That's an extraordinary lifespan for an ork, especially one that lived in the Underground and likely had very little medical care.
- Winterhawk

- That medical care aspect is important—see some notes later on in the posting about new observations on ork and troll lifespans.
- Glitch

- Harry had the same rare condition I do. Homo sapiens robustus clarkus, they call it. It's an anomaly in one of the metagenes that causes a human to goblinize as an ork. The goblinization process is the same, and we're genetically identical to every other ork out there, except

that we're not affected by the more rapid aging process that most orks suffer from. Instead, we apparently get a normal "human" lifespan. Current science says that less than one percent of goblinized orks have this trait.

- Bull

- This might not be as rare as it seems—read on in this download and you'll see some scientists casting doubt as to what is making our lifespans short, and the prospects for how long we might actually live.
- Butch

- I always wondered why you didn't look nearly as old as you should, Bull. Though you certainly act like it some days. Lucky you.
- Slamm-0!

- Yeah, lucky me. I've already outlived one child, and if Billy doesn't get himself killed as a runner, he'll possibly die of old age before me. Some luck.
- Bull

Plenty of orks out there take the "live fast, die young" notion to heart. The media tells us all about the ones who spend their days trying to pull one over on anyone who crosses their path, if it only means they can eke out an edge for tomorrow's exploits. You hear about orks like Magdalene Wild, who spends her days pulling crazy stunts in urban brawl. But you also hear about orks like Vaibhav Chadha, making waves in publishing, if only for his prolific pace. Or me. I'm someone who took that notion to heart a long time ago, terrified at the prospect of a shorter lifespan. My fear fueled me through school, and I came out the other end a doctor. I doubt I would have had the fire to get it done if not for that terror.

How do the longer-lived races view us? Well, we're a category in tourist's guidebooks. Rather, the level of violence toward us is the category. While I appreciate the inclusion ... Listen, I know a lot of people of all different metatypes from all over the globe. I've only ever had two conversations with people concerned that I'll die before they did. The first was my mom, and I started the conversation when I was eight. The second was a friend. She was an elf, and it turned out that her concern was misplaced. She died a few years ago. But my point stands that I don't believe the longer-lived races think much about our shorter lifespans. Everyone is too busy with their own drek and how they're squandering their own time to worry about us.

So there's precedent there to justify being

NEW QUALITY: HUMAN LIFESPAN

COST: 10 KARMA

This quality can only be taken at character creation. It replaces the ork's normal average lifespan with that of a human, so they age and mature at a human rate. It has no other effect on the character.

Goblinization is the expression of the ork and troll metagene in a human, transforming them painfully into a new metahuman form, usually around puberty. Today goblinization is exceedingly rare, with most metahumans expressing naturally at birth. It's not clear at the moment just how common this quality is among non-goblinized orks.

pissed off. What do we do about it? I think you have two alternatives. The first is the same as I advised you earlier: join government. It's not a joke. I realize you're far more likely to work firmly *outside* the sphere of government, but if you ever change your mind, I think you could work wonders.

- Hahahahahahahaha *gasp* hahahahaha!
- Lilith

Before I get into the other alternative, let me tell you the real reason I'm writing this. There was a conversation I watched a couple of weeks ago, on some news coverage of an attempted bombing downtown. One of the eyewitnesses said there was "a trog" involved. Someone else said there was a troll involved. But they weren't describing the same person.

Now, I realize we're talking about two different witnesses—completely unrelated. One of them was called out for being a "racist douche;" no one really said much about the other—but the thing that struck me was the difference between the two descriptions. "The trog" was said to be huge—at least three meters—and raucous: hanging out the window, had some enormous weapon, everything that would come to mind if you mentioned a troll boogeyman. By comparison, "the troll" was described as "seeming small for a troll," while also being well-dressed.

So, if we start our investigation by ignoring the fact that we're comparing the word choice of two people who are, as far as we know, complete strangers—hey, if social science isn't real science,

then we aren't constrained by the scientific method, are we? Shove that up your Biology 304 and smoke it—then we end up with an interesting conundrum. How does a trog differ from a troll or an ork? We already know what the media thinks. I'll tell you what I think, but first I want *you* to know *what you think*, if you haven't already figured it out. I wouldn't be surprised if you haven't. I would expect you to have plenty of preconceived notions. I'd expect you to have emotions tied up with it. But can you make a list? I'd like you to try before I tell you what I think.

What's the alternative to being pissed off all the time? I think it has something to do with personal responsibility. It's our responsibility to act when there's something wrong, but we don't have to choose to act in the same manner. I recognize that I'm not willing to fight for my rights and fair treatment by aiming for a job in government. That battleground is stacked against me by powerful individuals who prefer the status quo. I'll fight elsewhere, where I can stack the deck in my favor first.

Others have chosen other fields in which to fight. And the ways in which they fight vary: some people fight by shining in academics, others by needling people with their art. Some people choose a loud approach on a stage; others quietly send their work out into the world where people stumble across it. As long as your work has the capacity to change minds and attitudes for the better, I don't care what you do or where you practice it.

- Bulldrek! He's such a hypocrite.
- Lilith

- We're almost done. Can we get on with the rest of it, please?
- Chiron

- You don't believe me, whatever. You didn't hear the way he dismissed my plan to apply with Evo. But what am I telling you for? I'm not here to discuss this with you anyway.
- Lilith

Call it the power of habit, call it magic, call it whatever you like, but there is truth in the notion that what you pay attention to becomes your reality. I'm not talking the nutjobs on late-night trid trying to sell you their latest twelve-week program, I'm talking the sets you build to surround yourself every day. Do you spend most of your time complaining or pointing out the drek things that happened to you today? You can expect to see more of the same as you build the mental pathways that make it easier for you to notice the crap happening around you. Do you walk around posturing and pretending to be normal, chiding anyone who operates outside the narrow box you've envisioned stands in for normality? You're going to experience more challenges to your make-believe reality as you pave the way for your brain to notice the times when anything falls outside the norm, your own behavior included, and broadcast the perceived abnormality to the world.

That's a lot of words to basically tell you you've got to practice keeping your mental chatter on a higher road. Anything less could destroy you. So many people out there are waiting to cut you down in an attempt to lift themselves up. Why join them? You have work to do.

- This is what he keeps trying to drill into you, L. There's nothing wrong with a positive attitude. There are so many people who think that if you aren't disgusted and enraged all the time, then you aren't paying attention. Well, I *do* pay attention, and I know there's as much good out there as bad, and it's the good I choose to focus on. It brings me strength and helps me make more good in the world.
- Chiron

- Dear Ghost, you're ... you're serious, aren't you? You poor, little, delusional mess.
- Clockwork

You've read with me this far, so maybe you're interested in what I think the difference is between a trog and a troll or an ork. Trolls and orks are people; the media would publicly agree with that statement.

However, the media calls certain trolls and orks trogs, essentially those who behave in any way outside the (quite) small box they've assigned to "normal troll and ork behavior." The media portrays trogs as being enormous in size, diminished in intellect; bristly at best, maniacs at worst; dense in every way.

I disagree with this labeling scheme. Trogs are those trolls and orks who won't acquiesce to your social sensibilities, but they'll be honest. Trogs are those who stand up, speak up, and stare down any test, and that's the problem. The reason the me-

dia paints trogs so low is that trogs disrupt the set. Trogs tear down the stage of normality. Without that stage in place, we fall out from under the media's influence and no longer feel the need to buy their escapism and their improvements. To media, trogs are the enemy.

I say trogs wake us up, stir the pot, rock the boat, agitate the flock, whatever you want to call it. They help keep us free. Change is going to happen, whether we like it or not. It's the way of things. Why not work toward positive change? Acceptance of all metahumanity can only strengthen us as a whole, so it's time we stopped fighting amongst ourselves.

With the two of you out there, setting an example for others to follow, I think we're in good shape. We're not going to change all the minds at once, but as more people are born into a world with fewer active social stigmas against orks and trolls, the shift will happen. It's inevitable, but we can help give it a shove in the right direction.

Everyone's weird. The world's a weird place, and we're some of the weirdest of its weird residents. Stay weird, stay strong, stay proud, and stay in touch.

Love,
-R

- This is precisely the sort of drek that pisses me off. "Welp, there's nothing we can do, the world's going to drek, may as well just enjoy the last of our days in peace, donuts, and whipped topping on our soykaf." Lazy jackass.
- 2XL

- He is not a lazy jackass! Just try saying that to my face.
- Lilith

- Calm down, L. Everyone's got an opinion. I don't agree, though, 2XL. I think he said just the opposite, didn't he?
- Chiron

- Sorry, but you can't deny this guy is the epitome of privilege. He said it himself. Does anyone seriously think he's in any position to talk about what it's like to be a troll today?
- 2XL

- Maybe not, but he knows better than most that you're given this tiny chunk of time and it's all you've got. I call that good advice for any kid.
- Butch

- But can we please talk about the bulldrek he's spouting off in the second half of this letter? This is the kind of thinking that results in abandoned kids, and I'm sick of hearing it! You've got responsibilities other than yourself, folks! This is not a feel-good world; your mission in life is *not* to be as happy as possible. Instead of trying to positively chatter yourself free of your monthly rent, why don't you stop daydreaming and start fragging working to earn your rent like the rest of us? It's just what we need: a rash of self-aggrandizing people too busy being "responsible for themselves" to give a drek about the rest of us.
- Lilith

- That's not what it means—it's simpler than that. It means you don't take on the agony of trying to second-guess other people's reactions.

  Some years ago, my boss sent me to anger management. I told the therapist about a middle-manager in my office who spent most of his work day shooting the drek with a couple of lower-level employees in his office, feet up on the desk. I said how I wanted to tell him off for wasting time while the rest of us worked. The therapist asked me, "What would you do if, when you told him how you felt, he responded with 'I couldn't care less?'" I told him it would piss me off. He said that was part of my problem. It took me a while, but I figured out what he meant.
- Chiron

- So was that upper, middle, or lower anger management?
- Baka Dabora

- Definitely upper. You can tell by how much substance abuse is involved.
- Clockwork

- Not sure what you were looking for here, but did you find it?
- 2XL

- I think so. Thanks for the opportunity to talk with more than just my sister. I can never be sure what sort of reception we'll get, so it was nice to be here.
- Chiron

LIVING AS A TROG IN...

THE BLACK FOREST TROLL REPUBLIC

POSTED BY: DUSSELDORF ROLF

The Germans are no better than humans all over the rest of the world. It's been more than sixty years since the Awakening, and too many of them still think trolls are dim, clumsy, and frightening. You know—second-class citizens.

But fortunately, we have a place in the AGS where a troll can live like a troll. With almost no size-induced problems and nearly no tiny humans (or, ghost forbid, scrawny elves) to squeeze to death by accident. This place is the former Troll Kingdom, now known as the Black Forest Troll Republic.

BREEDING OF A KINGDOM

In the year 2038, the short-lived South German Federation separated from the rest of Germany. Their goal was to celebrate an ultra-conservative lifestyle, with all the funny events and customs those people know. Customs like social exclusion, harassment, and suppression that are the special province of those who pretend they are there to protect the weak. It didn't take long for rumors to spread about concentration camps and eugenics in these areas, and not long after that the rumors became proven facts. At that point, the troll resistance emerged from the Awakened Black Forest. An impressive troll by the (obviously fake) name of **Berthold** took the lead of the resistance. Not only was he able to draw the suppressed masses out of their lethargy, but he also pushed them to initiate an actual rebellion. They organized refugee camps deep in the woods, gained strength and support, and started a counter-offensive.

While the upheaval gained speed and support, all the ork and troll voices calling for their own nation were ignored by the governments in Hannover and Munich. They thought about this as a "local problem," meaning they were happy to leave it to smaller levels of government.

- When governments decide something is a "local problem," it's often because they want the local government to take steps that might be unpalatable or unbecoming for a national government. The whole "states' rights" argument behind the United States Civil War evolved because people wanted their governments to be okay with some people owning other people of a different race, but they wanted to cloak it in something that wasn't so baldly racist. So they say "state's rights," and let the states put the horrible stuff into legislation.
- Kay St. Irregular

In 2042, a series of earthquakes devastated Karlsruhe and volcanos within the Eiffel erupted and blocked the river Rhine. In the aftermath of these events, the troll resistance captured Freiburg without much loss. And in 2043, they declared the Black Forrest Territory with Freiburg as its capital. But the South German Federation was not willing to let go the Black Forest. The so-called "Troll Wars" lasted until 2044, when the great dragon Kaltenstein attacked Munich. That initiated the final fall of the government of the South German Federation. During the subsequent founding of the Allied German States, the Black Forest Troll Kingdom was formed as a state of its own.

Under the supervision of Kaltenstein, the Black Forest Kingdom was created following the blueprint of an actual kingdom. Led by a king (Berthold I), reeves, dukes, and all sorts of fancy medieval stuff. The Black Forest was known as a safe harbor for all kinds of metahumans—primarily trolls and orks, of course. During the '40s and '50s, the nation's population grew under the leadership of Berthold. But not everybody was a fan of the Troll King, because of his direct, blunt, and sometimes

rude behavior. In 2061, King Berthold vanished suddenly and was declared dead ten years later in an act of state. After his disappearance, Chancellor **Hugo von Hasslach** took over the leadership and steered the nation through Crash 2.0. It is safe to assume that this strong move prevented a long-lasting succession war. The end result of this is the founding of the Troll Republic, with President von Hasslach as leader.

Even if trolls are still the majority in the Black Forest, the ork community is on the rise. And after the "Gentle Giants" campaign in the Scandinavian Union, a lot of the giants moved over to the Troll Republic.

TROLL POLITICS

Today the Troll Republic is a sovereign nation, associated with the AGS but independent. And it has all the problems modern nations have to deal with—intrigues, scandals, and sometimes-difficult neighbors like Württemberg and Switzerland. The duchies were converted to counties, and all the aristocratic hierarchy is gone. That's a change not all former nobles are happy about, since a lot of income comes with this kind of title.

The People's Council tries to work together with the rest of the AGS and Europe to form strong bonds. So formerly loose laws (such as those covering weapons) were tightened, and borders are now more open for non-meta visitors. The law-enforcement agencies also try to work closely with the Bundespolizei and the Bundeswehr. Those so-called "Rangers" (given that name because they also take care of the forest) are not perfectly trained, but they have an excellent knowledge of the area.

- It's always an interesting dynamic when a group of people who have long defined themselves by their opposition to "The Man" suddenly not only find themselves being The Man, but doing some of the same things to themselves that they hated when The Man did it to them. All that is to say that the tightening of some of these laws did not always go smoothly, and resentment about the changes has not gone away.
- Sunshine

THE TROLL THING

Kaltenstein founded a group of troll animists to support Berthold during the Troll War. Today, the Troll Thing (look, the name sounds better in German) practices a druidic form of magic. Even if not considered as Wicca, it is a member of the Great Grand Coven of the AGS and the Czech Republic. In the now-more-open Troll Republic, it represents the skeptical powers of the nation dedicated to upholding tradition.

SHADOWS OF FREIBURG

Freiburg im Breisgau, the capital of the Troll Republic, is the most meta-friendly city in the AGS. Since the invasion by Berthold (to be honest, they handed him the keys on a silver platter), the town changed a lot. Even if they tried to preserve the historic ambience, the houses and huts needed change and improvement. Lots of walls and ceilings were broken down. Wooden floors and stairs were reinforced to meet the needs of trolls. It's a relief to visit Freiburg as a troll, because it was made by trolls for trolls. Yeah, well, and orks too. But if you're just a normal human, you probably won't feel welcomed here. Not only because of the sheer size of the buildings, doorways, furniture, and the like, but also because of the looks all the tall people around you shoot in your direction. Prejudice isn't a one-way road.

The shadowy folk in Freiburg focus on smuggling things from Württemberg to Switzerland. They also supply trollish shadowrunners with the tools of their trade. In their size, of course. You won't find a better variety of troll-modified guns

and armor anywhere in the world. Or at least not in Europe. And with a history of very loose weapon laws, you won't have any big problems finding a solid connection for these weapons.

- Amen. This reason alone is enough to make the Black Forest a must-visit locale for any trog who is in the general area.
- 2XL

THE AWAKENED BLACK FOREST

There are not only trolls and Freiburg in the Black Forest Troll Republic—there's also the forest. And I can tell you that this Awakened forest is not something from Snow White or some other fairy tale. Besides the usual animals, you have also a lot of Awakened plants, which makes the Black Forest not only interesting for telesma collectors, but also attractive to a lot of magic-focused corp subsidiaries. For them, this place is like the Amazon, but it only takes an hour to drive there to collect and explore. Most of the jobs offered in the Black Forest are for rescuing some adventurous rich kid. Or to collect some telesma or a rare paranormal species. The best part is, these kinds of missions aren't explicitly illegal, and they pay well. Just remember that you'll have to stay ahead of the dangers caused by a violent environment and some troll animists who think environmental protection covers trolls and animals only—other intruders in the forest are fair game. So bring some magical support with you.

GOING NATIVE (NAN)

POSTED BY: BULL

- Evelyn Red Tusk and Kulnar Broken Horn were born and raised within the Native American Nations. Both moved around extensively while they were younger as the children of NAN diplomats, and they eventually took on similar roles in adulthood. Neither are denizens of the shadows but both have had ample enough interactions with both sides to lend credence to their opinions and viewpoints. I took a page from our recent *Cutting Aces* drop and set them up with a little fake interview. They were given an intro prompt that just said, "Talk about life in the NAN from your metatypical viewpoint."
- Bull

Evelyn Red Tusk (ERT): I've learned a lot about myself and about being an ork in this world. Everything has changed over the years—some things for the better, some for the worse. The NAN has been one of the best places to grow up ork.

Kulnar Broken Horn (KBH): Well said, Evelyn. But let's not make this all seem like roses and sunshine. I suggest we narrow our conversations. If I recall correctly, we once met at a dinner for Edward Running-Horse in the PCC. It was back in '50, I believe. Seems we both have lived throughout this glorious congregation of nations and, therefore, as we both know, we can both speak to how different each one can be.

ERT: '50? I wasn't even ten, Kulnar. You must be mistaken.

KBH: I was ten, too. We were at a corner table. Among others of our kind. You were ghost-bent on meeting that fellow with the mop-top, the one you kept claiming was a shadowrunner.

ERT: Kully? Spirits. I would never have made the connection. And he *was* a shadowrunner. They called him Ghost Who Walks Inside, and if you remember everything so well, you'd remember that I did in fact meet him.

KBH: Well, you spilled a drink on him and then mumbled at him.

ERT: I was young. Ah, the PCC back in the '50s. Those were interesting times. They weren't the most progressive at that time. They've gotten better. Back then they had taken in and integrated so many of the Anglos that they influenced a lot of the beliefs on our kind. While other places had become much friendlier, the PCC was still a bit backwards. But that was then.

These days, the PCC is among my favorite places to visit. I think much of it has come from their growth and absorption of so many people who have been marginalized by others. The Ute Nation crumbled into them and their viewpoints, far more down to Earth than a lot of others who had lived the corporate life, helped give the orks and trolls a little more appreciation.

KBH: And when they helped out SoCal and picked up another chunk of lost souls, the support for the orks and trolls who had, for so long, suffered under the oppression and violence of Saito seemed to erupt across the nation. As a general rule, I find the people of the PCC to be more impressed with what you can do and less hung up on who you are. Evelyn?

ERT: For the most part, I agree. There are some areas, especially near the borders where tensions tend to run high between the PCC and their less-cordial neighbors to the south, where suspicion and a divisive mentality have increased the amount of friction between everyone who makes living there as an ork more stressful than other places. I'm sure it's the same for the trolls of these border regions.

KBH: Most definitely. The bulk of the trolls who take part in the the PCC's military service come from these border regions where they experienced the cultural damage firsthand. Often ostracized due to their bulk, the trolls who call these regions home know how to get out through voluntary service. Then, within the military, they meet many kindred souls of all metatypes.

ERT: I think orks have had similar stories in those areas. Though many fall prey to the gang culture that has become prevalent within ork society throughout the world. The sense of brotherhood created by the gangs is the surrogate of the brotherhood of the military. The topic of gangs leads me to the next point I wanted to discuss about orks in the PCC. The ones who live in the urban environment.

KBH: Ah, yes. The urban life is vastly different for trolls as well. But please, Evelyn, go on.

ERT: The tale of the urban ork is often one of struggle. The urban environs of the PCC are no different for our kind, but we do not struggle alone or without the understanding of a government that is familiar with strife created by being different. The PCC has a vast number of public-outreach programs that benefit the orks of the nation while also benefitting the PCC as a corporate entity, because

these programs provide work, education, recreation, and vocational training that eventually leads to a better life through corporate employment and citizenship.

KBH: That reminds me of one of the largest issues faced by the trolls—and orks as well—in the PCC, and that is the vast numbers who lack full citizenship and all the rights of regular corporate or national citizens. For most trolls, the problem arises with ethnicity requirements that they aren't sure they meet. Their parents weren't citizens and weren't sure of their bloodline, but they managed to survive on the fringes of society, and thus the trolls of the nation aren't willing to come forward to register and possibly find themselves facing limitations created by their ancestry. While citizenship opens up new paths, they are unfamiliar and unknown. For most, it is far easier to face the struggles they know than the struggles they do not.

ERT: Excellently stated, Kulnar. The PCC is among the most open and accepting of the NAN, and it's a brutal aspect of reality that we often feel forced to continue in the darkness because we don't know the path in the light. But that again is one of the reasons why I find the PCC to be a great place to grow up ork, because there are opportunities to get help navigating the new difficulties created by living within the system, rather than outside.

KBH: To sum up the PCC: It's a good place to be an ork or a troll from a cultural treatment standpoint, and those born and raised there are still working to build themselves up as a people.

ERT: While the PCC does it right, being an ork in the Salish-Shidhe is more of a struggle. The SSC breaks down in a very tribal fashion, leaving people with a natural sense of identity among their people. Early on, the orks "chose" to separate themselves from their respective tribes and form themselves into the Cascade Ork tribe. They took parts of every culture and pieces of the growing ork culture and evolved their own sense of identity.

KBH: Ah yes, the Salish. Not my favorite piece of NAN history to discuss when talking about trolls from the standpoint of humanity, but as a troll the treatment handed down by the SSC created a strong sense of cultural independence.

The Anglo historians claim trolls chose to move away from humanity. Their stories include everything from a simple departure to stories of them returning to their monstrous ways and moving into caves and living under bridges. Ridiculous things, but the victors write history. And since the trolls didn't fight back, most simply abandoned the societies that didn't want them. For them, it was an easy fight to win.

Don't get me wrong, this wasn't concentrated bigotry and hate. It was the result of a society already in turmoil and trying to build an identity from a damaged past that didn't have a place for the newer races, especially the ones that really couldn't fit in. I'll call it like it is in cases where our kind were openly hated and pushed to the fringes—I'm looking at you, CAS—but this isn't the case around the NAN. These places were just so busy trying to develop, they didn't have an inclusive mindset.

ERT: Doesn't that let them off the hook too easily? Like you only not discriminate when you take the time to remember to not do it?

KBH: You have a point. I guess what I'm trying to say is some of the prejudice was more about habit than malice. I guess you can decide if that's a distinction worth making, or if it makes anything any better.

Anyway, since the early days, things have changed little, but it's still not like bigotry like other places. Just a lack of integration between the races. As Evelyn has stated, the orks pulled out to be their own tribe, as did the elves. The trolls simply lacked numbers and a cohesive mindset for a tribe.

As we started, so we stay. And trolls are very independent in the SSC. Most live on their own in the wild or on the fringes of cities. They've made a place for themselves in places that the rest of the world has cast off and left behind, both urban and rural. Farms, forest cabins and caverns, and abandoned buildings are made into homes for trolls. And they aren't simple affairs. Working with their hands and working hard are part of the SSC troll mentality. Honestly, it's become much of the worldwide troll mentality.

ERT: Reminds me of the literacy rate debate.

KBH: Exactly. Trolls have the highest literacy rate because most live in places where everything is not electronic and handed to them in symbols and videos. They read. Abandoned libraries are a treasure in troll cultures around the world.

And the NAN has no shortage of those. Population shifts to urban centers left a lot of empty small towns all over the Pacific Northwest and the rest of Western North America, leaving behind plenty of local libraries with books still on the shelves.

For trolls, the SSC is a place to come to live if you like the life of an outsider. Not an exile, just someone who lives on the fringes and only comes to the heart of society as a trader and a visitor. You'll be treated cordially, but you'll find it uncomfortable to stay long because it isn't built to accommodate.

ERT: That's different for orks. They can fit within the rest of metahumanity's size scale, but the social systems in place do little to help them integrate. Much of the SSC ork population, Cascade and otherwise, are nomadic. They live on the move but not in a "move where the food is" type of way. More of a "move because sitting still feels like death" mentality.

Part of this is the smuggling. Yes, orks are sometimes stereotyped as t-bird smugglers racing from Denver to Seattle, dodging the SSC Rangers all the way. The stereotype is well-earned, there are a lot of ace jammers who come from Cascade stock, but there are even more backpackers and coyotes who help people and things find their way past checkpoints and over borders, sometimes even just between towns.

What this means for orks coming into the SSC is a certain expectation that you aren't expected to stay long and you are expected to have connections with smugglers, because every other ork seems to. You'll find overt racism rare, with the exception of the big cities that have managed to become infected with the plague known as Humanis. There you'll find the occasional metahater but worse, you'll find most citizens don't discourage

or encourage it. They simply stick to their tribe and let the Cascade Orks fight their own battles.

KBH: What about the Sioux? I'm biased by my affiliation I'm sure, but from what I've seen, orks, and trolls are ... well, let me hear your thoughts first.

ERT: The Sioux Nation values strength, which orks and trolls often have in spades. They've also faced some of the worst atrocities in history for being different. These two factors seem to play the greatest part in being an ork in the Sioux Nation.

We're accepted and even revered as long as we fit the stereotype for build. You can still be smart, but you need brawn. A scrawny ork, while still usually bigger than even a fit human, is regarded as an abnormality. You're treated like a second-class citizen because you are not a fit warrior. The gender of the ork doesn't affect this perception.

Not fitting in looks different here. The fringes of society are created more socially for orks here than physically. People will lower their expectations of you, and while that might seem to make life easier, it leaves these orks feeling left out. Even out on the physical fringes of society, the Sioux strength mentality is still present—often even more so than in the heart, leading some people to stay away from the nation's fringe to avoid feeling alienated.

KBH: Even the smallest trolls have the strength of a burly human. For trolls in the Sioux, it isn't a lack of physical strength that leads to problems, but a lack of mental fortitude. The nation has a strong magical culture, and some of the earliest displays of magical strength were targeted at trolls, but the magicians didn't target their bodies, they attacked their minds to show that even the biggest can fall to magic. This early cultural norm created an expectation for trolls to strengthen their minds if they wanted to be seen as anything more than brutes. It wasn't about knowledge and learning, but rather sheer force of will.

ERT: I've heard this before and it reminds me of another statistic I once read about troll magicians from the Sioux.

KBH: They are among the best in the world. I don't say that to stroke my own ego and not-inconsiderable talent. I say it based on contests around the world where Sioux trolls consistently win within the field of magic.

They aren't numerically superior, either. They have similar Awakening statistics as other nations, they simply live in a society that toughens them mentally and, to be totally honest, treasures their talent no matter their physical form. If the spirits are willing to grant you their powers, it doesn't matter if you're a meter-and-a-half-tall dwarf or a three-meter troll, you're special in the Sioux.

On a non-magical and non-martial front, trolls are treated with a lot of respect in the Sioux. They aren't catered to and the world still most-certainly doesn't fit them well, even in the Sioux Nation, but they aren't second-class citizens.

ERT: I'll admit, I haven't spent a lot of time up north. The AMC—the Algonkian Manitou Council—is admittedly one of my least-favorite places to visit. For too long, the influence of the megacorps shaped the viewpoints of the people, and not megas like Evo. Orks were a valued piece of the workforce here, but that was only if they worked. Predictable production was the measure of their value, and many of the cultural opinions of MCT shaped the values of the populace. Orks needed to have a high predictable production or else they were pushed out of society by the dim views of their character created by Japanese influence.

It wasn't passive, either. Orks in the AMC were actively ostracized if they did anything other than work and work hard.

KBH: Evelyn, I can see this topic is personal. Let me take a few moments and make a few comments before you move on.

The modern AMC is a gutted shadow of the nation it once was, and influences are changing. I can't say for better or worse yet, but for anyone who knows much about the traditional Japanacorp view on metahumans, trogs especially, they know there isn't much worse unless you visit a Humanis Policlub meeting. The influence of MCT did a lot to harm the trolls and orks of the AMC.

But there is a bright side—it just takes digging and changing your focus. Since the departure of MCT on such poor terms, cultural viewpoints they once insinuated into the nation are becoming less and less acceptable. The more traditional beliefs of the AMC tribes are beginning to reshape the culture in enough places that trog life is evolving.

The key to this transition is education and urbanization. Places that have better education are shifting faster, meaning urban centers and private corporate schools, though they are still influenced by the corporations that fund them. These spots are shifting their views of orks and trolls faster than more rural locations, where cultural beliefs often stagnate in the cesspools of rural ignorance.

ERT: That's exactly what I encountered during my last trip. I was visiting on behalf of my soci-

ety and made five stops. Saskatoon was the only urban stop I made. It was at the beginning of my travels, and it helped start my trip with hope. The AMC, post-MCT, was opening up and integrating all aspects of metahumanity better than I had ever seen in all my years of visits. Orks were gaining more power positions, and not just the token ones so often created to develop the appearance of equality.

Then we left and headed out to several of our more rural chapterhouses. Our society is small but affluent, so we can afford small places in many cities even without a large nearby population for support. It offers our members a chance to travel and use our houses as a place to stay on both physical and spiritual journeys. My tusks remained an impediment to my social acceptance throughout the rural environments of the AMC. Most of the discrimination was polite—a missing greeting, a long wait for a server, slow service in an empty restaurant, that sort of thing. But a few times it was quite overt. Insults muttered under the breath, which is the favored technique people use to follow claims that they don't have anything in my size, be it clothing, chairs, beds, portions, or whatever.

KBH: I face that every day. Though in my case it is often true, it is still a stab at our races.

ERT: That was the bad part. There was good. The orks who lived there were a tight-knit and hardworking bunch. They helped each other and functioned more as a community than as individuals. It was nothing like the corporate-inspired dog-eat-dog mentality of most people; instead, it was all about making the best world they could in a place that didn't like them.

KBH: With the growing support—primarily Matrix-based, at the moment—of groups like Mothers of Metahumans and the Sons of Sauron, we are pushing back to gain equal footing in the country as well as the cities of the AMC.

CHICAGO BLUES

POSTED BY: CHI-TOWN SUZIE

Suzie Blue (SB): Hello Chi-trog Nation! This is Suzie Blue coming to you live from high in the sky! We've got a doozie for you today. D-Wreck is here to talk about life in the former CZ. Specifically about life for those of us built too big for the regular-joe world. Yup, orks and trolls are gonna get some local spotlight today. On with the show!

Hey, D, thanks for stopping by!

D-Wreck (D): It's my pleasure, Suzie. I'm honored you tapped me to talk about life here in Bug City.

SB: Straight to the heart. Only locals, and especially locals who lived through it, call this place Bug City with a smile. How'd you make it during the closed-off CZ days?

D: Played it smart. Made myself invaluable. Pulled my weight. All those sayings pretty much cover it. I worked my way first into a local neighborhood. They weren't too keen on me when I first arrived, but when they saw the advantages of having an ork of my stature around, they were happy to have me. Well, most of the time.

SB: Tell us about the hard times.

D: Orks all over got the same wrap. Trolls got it worse. Being bigger means you need more food. We're resource hogs, plain and simple. Others put up a lot of votes to kick me and other orks out, but we stuck together. Said one goes, we all go, and then we worked together to bring in tons of resources. We worked night and day sometimes so that we could bring in so much food and water that no one questioned whether we were worth it. And when local warlords or the bugs came, we were the front line. No one wanted to face those horrors without the Monsters of the Midway, as we took to calling ourselves.

SB: A classic name for classic guys. I know you didn't make it the whole time in one neighborhood. What brought that to an end?

D: Great lead-in, Suzie. The same thing that cost us our safety then is what's costing us our city now. Too much infighting. Ego is killing us.

As the corps move back in, they're preying on our greed, playing off our memory of the years we spent scraping and struggling just to survive. I've actually seen more orks take corporate security jobs here than ever before. Then they're getting dumped back into the CZ and fighting to survive while being paid by the corps instead of helping out other zoners. It's a sad state of affairs.

SB: Hah. Didn't expect the diplomatic side of the infamous D-Wreck to jump out.

D: Survived on smarts as much as smacking the drek outta bugs and wannabe warlords. And speaking of the warlords, that's where a lot of orks ended up. When the walls opened, the corps had a lot less opportunity for orks outside the zone than the smaller races. Then the communities they had been part of lost too many people and collapsed. The orks ended up short on friends, and

the warlords were looking for resources that were left behind.

The orks of the CZ were just one of those resources. The Horde took in a lot.

SB: What about the trolls? You mentioned them earlier. Do you know how they fared?

D: Better than many would have expected. Very few managed to get accepted into the communities of the smaller races. If they thought an ork was a resource hog, imagine a troll's daily caloric intake. It's pretty insane. So most of the trolls went the solo nomad or hermit route. The trolls lived on their own so that they were only responsible for themselves. They were big, burly, and could survive in plenty of places that made most people sick. While the bugs targeted them for their potential, they were, by and large, the ones most capable of standing against them and living to tell the tale.

Yeah, a lot of them found their way into the crews of warlords all over the CZ, but the majority flew solo, made it through, and came out as some of the toughest trogs around. After the bug threat lessened and the CZ opened back up, the trolls of Chicago have had a chance to come together, share stories, develop a network, and build the foundation of one of the strongest troll societies I've ever seen.

That's the modern Chicago trolls. Isolation and a genuine independence offered them the opportunity to get away from the expectations of the other races. It was their chance to make a place for themselves somewhere that no one else seemed to want.

SB: It's good that someone outside the culture noticed. Please go on, this should be good. An outsider's view on Chicago's troll culture.

D: I'm no expert. But I'm happy to tell everyone what I know. The trolls here in Chi-town have worked hard. They deserve some props.

As most folks who are interested already know, trolls are the most literate race. Pushed to the fringes of society, they've lived in the past. Libraries have been a favorite troll residence in every city I've ever seen. They're built big, and they're all but abandoned and obsolete these days. Filled with books. And trolls have used them, including in Chicago.

The trolls here squatted in many of Chicagoland's libraries since well before '55. After the CZ got locked up, they had solid places to hole up and gather. A lot made maps that were coded to get their fellow trolls from one safe library to the next. Books, art, and music were just a few of the offerings troll society has managed to master and present with a grace no one would expect.

SB: You really get it.

D: I'm not done bragging on you all just yet. The trolls in Chicago have stepped their efforts up to the next level in terms of making a place trolls can call home and live comfortably. All over the CZ, C-Cubed travels and does their thing. C-Cubed stands for Chitown Construction Crew. They're based out of a little enclave called Hoodville, but they move all over. They gut structures and refit them for trolls. Reinforce, resize, and genuinely renew the places. They tend to stick with multistory spots, but there's no shortage of those in Chicago. The buildings don't just get floors and ceilings—they get culture, art, and a genuine renaissance feel.

SB: Do you know 3D? C-Cubed's founder.

D: Heard of, never met.

SB: We'll have to change that.

D: Sounds like a cool guy. He's got a lot on his plate, though. From what I've heard recently, the efforts of C-Cubed are like giant bullseyes for other groups in the CZ. Hoodville isn't far off the Human Brigade's turf, and plenty of meta-unfriendly types have very little issue with fragging up any efforts to make life better for our kind.

SB: So true! Sorry to cut you off, D-Wreck. We need to cut the interview short. Seems some of those meta-unfreindly types you mentioned have gotten wind of our location.

This is Suzie Blue and Chicago's own, D-Wreck, signing off. Stay trog, Chicago!

DUBAI

POSTED BY: 2XL

Dubai is one of those cities where you can spend most of your day with people treating you normally, politely even, until you get one of those incidents that reminds you that something is off. Sometimes it's really subtle—someone bringing up, apropos of nothing, how they really like *Neil the Ork Barbarian*, and if Neil was a real ork, they'd be totally okay with having him in their home. Other times it's the ever-classic "Your horns are so shiny! They look smooth! Can I touch them?" These are the things that remind you that, in the eyes of most of the residents of the city, you are not normal. You are other. That then puts you in the spiral that gets you to wonder how much of

the normal interactions were actually normal, or if people were forcing themselves to be normal, putting on the mask of politeness that is pretty easy to tear. So you get tense, and sometimes all the nonsense makes you snap, and people go off and talk about how it seems like orks and trolls are always angry.

Now, that sort of atmosphere is not unique to Dubai, but the general conservatism of the Arabian Caliphate and some of the negative attitudes in the nation to anything associated with magic accentuate it. But Dubai is a cosmopolitan city, where people see themselves as more sophisticated than their non-urban counterparts. That's part of the issue—rather than actually *being* accepting, they often strain to *show* themselves how accepting they are. It's better than a lot of alternatives, sure, but it still can be wearying.

Dubai is a financial capital, with all the positives and negatives that implies. If you can make yourself financially useful to someone, then people are willing to overlook a whole lot in order to reap whatever you offer. If you're not financially useful? Garbage haulers leave the city daily, and they always have room for one more piece of refuse.

- It really is as bad as all that, or at least close. Expanding a desert city is a lot more difficult than building out in cities placed in more habitable areas. They don't want to build more than they have to (unless it's a showy new skyraker), and they don't want to make space for the useless. Buying you a plane ticket out of town can be cheaper than keeping you around, so that is often their preferred solution.
- Am-mut

Another downside of the financial orientation of the city is that people keep an eye on available bounties that might make a nice payday. So if you pissed someone off who might put a little extra on your head due to your tusks or horns, someone in town is going to find out about it. You'd better be worth more to them than the bounty is, or things are going to go south for you fast.

The easiest way for an ork or troll to gain acceptance in the Caliphate is to be a Muslim. Once people see you kneeling next to them regularly in prayer, they become a whole lot more accepting. Which is to say if you can fake religious sincerity, you've got it made.

- We don't have to be like that, do we? Is it so outlandish that some of us might operate out of genuine religious principles? Or at least have enough respect for them to not use them as a thin disguise? I'm sure the faces of JackPoint have enough tools at their disposal to build trust that we don't have to rely on something so cheap.
- Goat Foot

- Life has taught me one thing repeatedly: Take the opportunities you are given.
- Haze

But let's talk about a few issues specific to the city itself. Physically, the city has healed from the wounds left when Hestaby attacked the Saeder-Krupp headquarters here. The new building is gleaming and posh, with a curved top that cuts into the sky like a scimitar. As one might expect from Lofwyr and his corp, the headquarters do not back away from anything. But while the building is fully occupied and bustling, the mental memories of the attack don't disappear quickly. Most of the people in the city were there when the attack happened, and the memories are fresh. This leads to insecurity, and metahumanity has a funny way of letting those insecurities out.

As one might expect, dragons are the chief target of this brand of anxiety, but that's of little consequence. What is the city going to do, ban dragons? Alamais is dead, so the dragon most likely to stop by won't, but even if another dragon decides to visit, the city and Caliphate are not likely to stop them. If the life of Ghostwalker has shown the world anything, it's that stopping a dragon from going where it wants to go is not something you want to try without another dragon leading your forces.

- The Az-Am War taught the same lesson.
- Picador

The city, then, has not taken any direct action against dragons, but drakes are another matter. Drakes are outright banned. They don't want any part of people who are doing the bidding of dragons but can disguise themselves as humans. Want to make a quick 50k in Dubai? Find a drake wandering the streets and bring him into the authorities—dead or alive.

- You can even bring a drake from outside and present them to the authorities. They don't ask many questions. Getting bodies through customs is a bitch, though.
- Kane

But what does this mean for orks and trolls? First off, we're not the most reviled metatype in the city. So that's something! But secondly, it gives a common enemy who is not us, which presents another chance to bond with the locals. Spend enough time not being a drake, and you may win some people's trust.

The most important thing to remember about Dubai is that it is a nonsensical city, an oasis willed into existence by oil sheikhs, rather than built in a way that makes sense. These sheikhs were savvy—they knew a diversified economy is what a city needs to survive, so they built Dubai to outlast the oil boom. Despite the fact that the average high tops thirty-seven degrees for a whopping five months of the year, there are still golf courses, soccer fields, tennis courts, and other outdoor activities (it also has an indoor skiing facility, because of course it does). It's a desert that has convinced itself it's a beach, and damned if it doesn't do an awfully good imitation.

One of the obstacles the city has built for itself, though, is it doesn't have the deep history of world-class cities such as Berlin, Beijing, and New York. It built its reputation on being glossy and new, and one step ahead of everyone else in terms of eye-popping architecture and luxury. You do not maintain that reputation by standing still, so Dubai is constantly under construction. A building that's a decade old has lost its edge, and if a building makes it to two decades, it's an antique. You either need to tear it down or find a way to gut it that will make it fresh again. Some people figure Hestaby did Lofwyr a favor in taking down the S-K headquarters, as it was going to be due for a rebuild before long.

While automation and nanonforges do a lot of this work, metahuman labor is still required, and like most cities with large pockets of luxury, those who do the work are not allowed anywhere near the good stuff in their downtime. Northeast of the city is the district called **Muhaisnah**, known sarcastically to the locals as Sonapur, the City of Gold. This area is full of plain concrete buildings with dwelling spaces that total twenty square meters if you're lucky. Most workers sleep on thin mats that aren't much softer than the floor but at least provide a degree of separation from the sand and dust. The good news is that they don't need kitchen space, or even a food budget, because meals are provided to them. The bad news is that the "meals" are lentil paste, three time a day. If you were judged to have worked well in a particular day, you might get a flavor packet.

- Any city depends on its manual labor, but Dubai's bigwigs sometimes forget this and don't protect their workers well. All the lentil paste is processed in huge batches in a factory right in Muahaishah. Want to bring the city to a halt? Mess with the food supply, and keep the workers off-duty for a day, a week, or more. You'll see panic set in nice and quick.
- Stone

Why am I detailing this? Because, you guessed it, Muhaishah has the highest percentage of orks and trolls of any neighborhood in the sprawl. Are you a trog who wants to disappear and be unnoticed in Dubai for a while? Muhaishah is the place to be. Just don't carry around expensive, obvious weapons, and be prepared to experience desert heat without a trace of air conditioning.

If you want to spend time in the more civilized part of the city, more power to you. The good news about the sprawl is that so many buildings are new that they are built with ork and troll accommodations in mind. There are few cities where trolls will have to spend less time ducking their heads under doorways than Dubai, and almost every establishment has chairs that not only fit but generally are comfortable.

The bottom line on Dubai is this: If money can be spent on a thing to make orks or trolls comfortable, and you're not in the slums, that thing is probably there. If it can't be changed with money—like people's attitudes—then you're going to have less luck getting anything done here.

ATLANTA ... KINDA SORTA

POSTED BY: SOUTHERN GUARD

All right, folks, I want to talk about Atlanta, or Hotlanta as some call it, and specifically Sweetwater Creek! Seattle's Ork Underground and its Prop 23 and racist governor got tons of Matrix love, but we've had plenty of problems of our own in a place that is just as much a haven for the orks and trolls of the Atlanta region as the Ork Underground was for Seattle. As you can tell by my moniker, I'm a resident. I work for the best security corp on God's green Earth—and I'm proud to tell anyone who asks, because this place is a trog utopia.

Now, it ain't really a utopia, I know what that means, but it sure as sugar is the best place this tusker's ever lived. It wasn't always like this though, so I'll start back at the beginning.

- Just so you all understand and read this with the right mindset, I edited the transposed document because every single -ing was -in' because Southern Guard works hard to keep up his southern cred!
- Bull

Well before this ol' boy was born, the government of Atlanta had a problem. At least they called it a problem. They had too many orks and trolls, and not enough spaces for them to live. This isn't true, but it's what they said. So they offered all metahumans the opportunity to relocate near Sweetwater Creek State Park, where they were going to build housing and a community from the abandoned warehouses and factories east of the area. The park was offered as a place to farm as well, but that's not such a keen thing. We'll get to that in a bit.

This "opportunity" is a real polite way of saying, "get the frag out!" If you were an elf or a dwarf in those days, it wasn't too bad, but if you were an ork or a troll, it was like old-time segregation. They even passed laws about how buildings needed to be stronger for orks and trolls and opened a legal way for everyone and their brother to keep out our kind. There was plenty of racial tension early on, but after a while trolls and orks just took to the highway (or the government busses) and moved into their modern internment camp. It was damn tragic.

But, thing about orks and trolls is that they make for a fearsome team. Trolls may be big, but they ain't dumb. A lot were well-read, including being up on things like construction and business. And not to knock my people as just strong backs, but that's a thing they do in fact have. The Atlanta gov-

ernment expected them to rot in squalor, because all of a sudden that money for renovation and construction just wasn't in the budget, but when they actually sent out their census workers, they got back crazy numbers and even crazier stories.

The mayor at the time came out for a visit and was shocked at what had become of this once-decrepit area. So much so that he even tried to get the trolls and orks kicked out so he could gentrify the area. That didn't go over too well, and the first of many small scuffles went to the group with more fighters over one hundred and fifty kilos. Political pushing came next, but Sweetwater Creek had somehow already made friends with one of Atlanta's biggest powerhouses, the Atlantean Foundation. Details of the origins of this alliance are lost to several crashes, but locals talk about a team of trogs who helped out an Atlantean scientist with a series of research trips that located several powerful trinkets. Point is, they kept the political wolves at bay and allowed Sweetwater Creek time to shine.

With some pressure off and a powerful friend looking out for them, folks felt Sweetwater might actually be a safe place. At least safer than Atlanta proper, where lynchings were starting to come back in style. It wasn't the brightest point in the capital's history. But despite this, local population grew rapidly, though unsurprisingly ork and troll populations around the rest of the city plummeted. Just about every ork and troll in the city packed up and moved over to Sweetwater. It was tough in those early days. A lot of building, but we had strong backs in abundance.

Once they had the foundation, local economics started to pick up. Cash flowed in, mostly off the black and grey markets, but it was cash and it moved through the local shops, giving Sweetwater its own little neighborhood economy. What came next was the big step Sweetwater Creek needed.

It started with Southern Guard, a classically named security firm that only offered two types of officers: large and extra large. Site security, bodyguarding, transport services, and other small-team operations got them noticed. That and their unique statures. The efforts didn't stop there, and Southern Guard recently earned single-A status from the Corporate Court during all this Megacorporate Revision mumbo-jumbo. It was a bit of a shock, since most of the corps out there are getting knocked down, not boosted up, but somehow all them AAAs buying up the little guys left space for a few more little guys.

- That's funny. Southern Guard is no better than an Atlantean Foundation subsidiary. Trace back the money and the stock ownership, and you'll find a whole lot of it in the personal portfolio of Shiela B.
- 0rkCE0

- That's interesting, considering that Southern Guard has also been getting friendly with DocWagon, another Atlanta native, and operating as subcontracted HTR Teams for the medicorp.
- Balladeer

One big company wasn't enough for Sweetwater Creek, but security is one of the few markets where size is a benefit, so Sweetwater's entrepreneurs moved on to a place where size doesn't matter: the Matrix. Big Tech is a Matrix design, security, and support firm started and based in Sweetwater Creek. They employ orks and trolls with tech skills (and several technomancers, but don't tell nobody). These two have been followed by a half-dozen or so others, giving Sweetwater a nice smattering of job opportunities for the orks and trolls who live there.

- Best part is, they don't usually care about whether you've got a SIN or not. They just employ you in a different aspect of their operations.
- Sounder

- I'm giving a rundown on some corps elsewhere. If you want more info on some Sweetwater corps, check it out.
- Goat Foot

With all the growth and the great community life here, it makes me sad to talk about the bad parts. But they exist. First off, Atlanta treats the place like a foreign country. The capital has passed plenty of laws to make orks and trolls feel unwelcome in the city proper, and when they are there they get treated like second-class citizens. It sucks for them, and every other ork who comes to town, but Sweetwater Creek has done plenty to make up for that and welcomes orks from around the world to stay there and just visit downtown.

Bad point number two: A trog utopia can't stand without those who absolutely hate us coming to try to knock it down. We get our fair share of Humanis protests blocking the highway or marching through our streets. They usually keep it civil, mainly because Southern Guard holds the town's policing contract, but they've

done some property damage, and their verbal assaults don't go unheard by our youth. Worse than them, though, is Alamos 20,000. They've already claimed six bombings, including one that took down part of town hall, but we can't get any real help in dealing with those bastards because politics being what they are, no one in Atlanta seems to care.

- The Feds have been there to investigate, but the locals are so xenophobic, they don't talk to the smoothie agent that gets sent. The office in Atlanta has been requesting an ork be transferred to work with Sweetwater, but for some reason it keeps getting held up.
- Butch

- Transfers have been blackmailed, killed, and had family kidnapped in order to keep them out of the Atlanta office. And we all know who's doing that dirty work.
- Bull

SEATTLE STOMPING GROUNDS

POSTED BY: SEATTLE'S BEST

We all know Seattle is a hub of shadowrunning not only in NorthAm but around the world, and we orks populate the shadows in abundance. We won't get into the cultural reasons of it—this ain't the place for that—but I did want to point out the best place for orks to live here, those spots that show them love, and the worst spots that they should avoid like there is some kind of ork-specific plague found there.

And trolls roll right alongside us in all these places, too, don't want to forget about our big brothers.

Ask any tusker in the Emerald City and they'll still call it the Ork Underground. It's formally known as the Seattle Underground District, but we all know who lives down there. Yup, there are halfers and a few keebs, but tuskers and trolls rule the roost. There's no place in the world that an ork feels more welcomed and accepted than here. That includes places like Germany, but then again it's the Troll Republic, not the Ork Republic. Though I'd say they treat trolls pretty solid in the Underground. Only major problem is right there in its name—it's underground. Making enough space for trolls means carving up some extra rock, and lots of people don't bother. End result is, this place is primo living for us orks.

While the barrens districts definitely have elements that suck, orks can find themselves a good family connection in Redmond and Puyallup. Even if it's gang life with the Crimson Crush, it's good to be an ork here. Best thing about these places is that everyone here gets to feel like we orks do all the time. Stepped on, looked over, and kicked to the curb unless we're lickin' boots. Plus, for trolls out in the barrens, nobody's gonna come along and check your building permit for a little remodeling to make the place more user-friendly. I've seen plenty of places where the occupants have totally stripped a building of a floor. It's like the troll version of high ceilings. Staircases are usually the biggest issue—they aren't built for troll feet or, more troublesome, troll mass. It can be a rough life, but it's better than living under someone's boot in the fancier parts of town.

- Those structural issues are serious trouble. I know there are places that use them as a way to keep trolls out, and that's a drek thing to do, but it takes a bit of reinforcement to support their bulk. And out in the barrens, where things have been deteriorating for decades, trolls are best off looking for a place with a nice concrete slab and staying away from the heights.
- Goat Foot

As for the rest of the metroplex, it's mostly manageable except for one district: Snohomish. That place is a racist death trap for orks and trolls, and even non-dandy elves, who wander across its borders. It seems like almost every resident is a member of a policlub, mostly Humanis, but several other less-than-friendly off-shoots are represented with lawn signs and window decals. If you ain't garden-variety human, keep the window tint up and the trog rock turned down.

- One thing to point out: This is no different than a "garden-variety" human stepping foot in the Underground. Even being official and removing the ork preface, it's not welcoming to humans.
- Sounder

- There's a difference between keeping people out because of fear and hate, and keeping people out because you aren't a sideshow for them to ogle in wonder and awe. Humans treat the Underground like it's a trip to the zoo. They go for the amusement of seeing the "poor orks."
- Bull

- Don't be too upset, Bull, I go everywhere to be amused by the people. No matter whether tusks, horns, height, haughtiness, or humanity separates them from me, people are just amusing.
- Kane

NEO-TOKYO

POSTED BY: SUGOI SUZU

There are always people in any nation who want to put discriminatory practices in the past. In the Japanese Imperial State, you'll have people emphatically tell you how they haven't sent orks or trolls to Yomi Island in sixteen years. So clearly the racism problem is solved! But when the emperor talks regularly about a return to tradition, people can't help but wonder if traditions steeped in racism are among the ones these individuals are most eager to bring back. So far, there has been no movement to make anything like that happen in Japan, and the decrease in anti-ork and -troll activities noted in recent years has not reversed itself. But you'd better believe that trogs are scanning any political statements coming out of the traditionalists to see if they can find hints of looming doom, or indications that forces that might harm them are marshaling themselves behind the scenes. After years of regular (if slow) progress, the specter of reversal is alarming, leading to increased tension in ork and troll communities.

- The build-up they're worried about is happening, but at levels that are way out of anyone's sight.The government's contracting power is considerable, and it has long been used to buy allies, generate favors, and funnel money to secret caches. Plenty of traditionalists have gotten government contracts in the past few years, and you can be sure that some of that money was placed into hidden accounts instead of spent on designated projects. That money is still there, waiting.
- Snopes

- Look, Japan is not going to open up a race war, or exile metas, or anything crazy like that. Most of the traditions they're concerned about date to a time way before metas, so they don't really need to do anything about metas to emphasize those traditions.
- DangerSensei

- That's an overly sanguine view. When you emphasize a time without metas, you are planning on erasing them. That doesn't mean genocide or anything, but it means developing a culture where metas are increasingly invisible. If you do an effective enough job alienating people from society around them, you don't have to worry about exiling them. They just leave of their own accord.
- Sunshine

But Neo-Tokyo is a vast city, and no city of this size is ever just one thing. There may be worries, but they do not consume every moment of each ork or troll's life, and there are parts of this city where we thrive.

One of these parts is **Harajuku**. For a decade this has been one of the gathering places of the city's young, the place where you go to find the hottest new designers who are setting up shop and selling their new designs directly to the public. The younger generations of Japan are more accepting of metas than the old, and they are especially fond of anyone who knows how to use their unique body types as part of their designs. You'll find plenty of ork and troll designers here, but what you won't find is a designer trying to make a trog look like a graceful, flowing elf. Take Rockblood (which is an assumed name; he was born Benji Nakamura). He focuses a ton of attention on the shoulders of his clothing, putting bold colors up there and then tapering the garments into black or other dark colors. The results make ork and troll shoulders even more imposing, drawing attention to the power of our forms. His troll fashions use tight shirts with a nanoweave that allow dermal deposits to poke through, then close up the holes when the garment is removed. The dermal deposits become part of the fashion in a clear statement of troll pride (though Rockblood is an ork).

That's just one example. There are other creative designers and artists in the district who make no apologies for what they are and who they design for. Their work has no appeal to humans (except for trog posers), and that is perfectly acceptable to the designers. If you're in Neo-Tokyo, try to make time for a trip here. It's refreshing.

- It's not just for relaxation, either. Besides the normal corp intrigue of businesses wanting to spy on each other to get a leg up on competitors' plans, there is an underground technomancer railroad that runs through here, helping keep TMs out of Mitsuhama's hands. Some of the designers keep TMs there for a time, letting them help design some techno-fashions. It's a good hideout, because the cover is pretty legit. MCT comes sniffing around there

periodically, so there can often be work in feeding them misinformation or quickly removing someone who needs to get out, quick.
- Jimmy No

- Some of the escapees have moved to Akihabara and formed an alliance of anti-Japanacorps technomancers. Though that's a little off-topic.
- Netcat

The flip side of Harajuku is **Kudan**. If there is a hotbed of traditionalist sentiment that will roll back protections for trogs, it's here. The headquarters of the Imperial Army is nearby, and plenty of trogs believe that contributes to the Saito-like feel of so many people here. Stay away, unless you're gathering intel on the opposition.

Roppongi is kind of a mixed blessing for trogs. It's in the Minato ward, long reputed to be the best place for metas, partly due to its high population of foreigners. It's got a lot of energy, with bars, strip clubs, brothels, and nightclubs keeping traffic in the neighborhood at all hours, especially the later ones. Trogs can find a lot of work here, but it's not always good work. Business owners see a troll, and they automatically think "bouncer"—getting pigeonholed is all too easy.

- They're especially interested in hiring oni bodyguards, for that "authentic local flavor" or whatever. You'll get some people taking those jobs with a sense of pride, thinking they're being recognized for their distinct nature, while others think they're being objectified and exploited. I lean toward the latter.
- Mihoshi Oni

And, of course, you can't have a red-light district without a reasonable flow of people wanting to know what it's like to get it on with a trog. Some people are willing to satisfy their curiosity, but beware—there's a variety of working conditions in these places, ranging from "reasonably considerate of worker welfare" to "pretty much slavery."

- What this means is that if you are looking for a trog that went missing in Neo-Tokyo, start in Roppongi. Trogs won't stick out there, so their presence won't raise questions, and there are too many places where trogs might be held against their will.
- Mihoshi Oni

NAGASAKI ONI

POSTED BY: YOMI NOMORE

Want to give a place a reputation, drop an atomic bomb on it. Want to give it an even worse reputation, welcome orks and trolls there under false pretenses, and then get angry when they don't all die or go sterile. Thank you, Mitsuhama!

As most educated folks know, way back in World War Deuce, the US actually dropped a WMD on Japan to get them to stop fighting. (It took two, which goes to show the tenacity and strength of the Japanese character.) This led to a ton of deaths, but it didn't create a radioactive wasteland like today's big bombs would. In fact, Nagasaki came back strong. Right up until the late teens, when mana and mass idiocy combined to cause all sorts of problems in the region. Ancient history lesson: In short, Nagasaki went toxic. The astral taint on the city is well-known in magic circles.

It became a tough place to survive, but it still had inner strength and a survivor mentality, so as a rising megacorp with slacking morals, MCT wanted a workforce they thought could handle difficult environments. They found a great solution to two problems. It helped that they didn't care if the orks and trolls (monsters in their eyes) didn't survive.

But they did. Problem is, they stopped working for MCT, because, well, they're horrible to most metas. Japanese orks are called oni (demons), which tells you most of what you need to know about their thoughts on them. That was the problem for MCT. For orks and trolls, it was great. They made themselves a healthy little community and really took on the survivor mentality of the city. So much so that the *hibakusha*—survivors of the bomb—gave them a place of honor and protected them when MCT sent forces to remove them.

Since then, the orks and trolls of Nagasaki have weathered the rise of the Kihara-rengo, the local yakuza, by standing firm against their influence and attempts at intimidation. Again, a great way to tick off MCT, though the Kihara-rengo has often not seen eye to eye with MCT's lackey yaks.

Their community almost fell in 2061 during the Ring of Fire eruptions, but even the flow of lava cannot hold its course against the force of the Nagasaki trogs. (Sorry chummers, this is just exciting to me.) The local trogs banded together quickly and did some awesome civil engineering that deflected and rerouted tons (literally) of lava around

their community. The cooled lava is now like a wall for them in the places where it stands.

- There was serious mojo involved in that, and not all of it was on the up and up. The Nagasaki trogs have a few radiation shamans among their populace. I'd say they border on toxic, but it's not true. They're toxic, they've just got good PR.
- Mihoshi Oni

Last bit of coolness about these guys. Most people familiar with the Japanese underworld have heard of the bosozuko, go-gangers who tear up the streets and highways of Nippon. Well, around Nagasaki, the top crew, Atom's Bombs, get all their wrench-work done by Tucho Ogi and his wrench monkeys at Rad Rides. She's an ork, all her mechanics are trogs, and nobody can tweak a ride like them. Racers from all over Nippon have been coming here for work. The only rule Tucho holds to right now is that no other bosozuko can get work done.

- Not true. No oni get their bikes built there. Then again, they also own the shop. Tucho was the top rider for them until a tire blowout at 200 kph sent her tumbling off Unzen.
- Turbo Bunny

KINGDOMS OF NIGERIA AND THE CONGO TRIBAL LANDS

POSTED BY: GROOVETOOTH

Let's get one thing cleared up real fast: Lagos is not the only city in the Kingdoms of Nigeria, and to tell you true, it's not even a city in Nigeria. It's an independent city-state, probably the reason why every runner who's ever thought traveling the world was a good idea knows this place. Independent cities are great for shadow biz. That cleared up, I'll tell you that overall, the Kingdoms of Nigeria have a pretty positive view of orks. Having tusks will often get you a little leeway with locals as long as you don't act like a complete hollowhead. Most outsiders get the cold shoulder at best, and hot lead isn't outside the norm. Best bet is to make sure you know some of the local culture, honor it, and be willing to admit when you fragged up.

Now, you aren't going to waltz in and suddenly be living the ork dream. First off, that's a myth; nowhere is a dream. Every place has its troubles, you just gotta find the spot that troubles you the least. Point is, you'll need to work your way into the native way of life. Now don't go freaking out and thinking you'll need to don a loin cloth and bone armor. Life here isn't some ancient throwback, no matter what *Lagosian Heat* shows you every week. There are plenty of tribes that still live a simple life, and live it happily, but you can find tribes and groups in Nigeria that gladly accept you for your tusks and let you live their way. You'll need to make sure you understand that, because nothing makes a tribal leader angrier than to have some outsiders trying to convince his people that everyone needs a commlink or the latest Ares pistol. Well, maybe they'd be more angry if you tried to sleep with their daughter or convince their people to join another tribe, but such things are ridiculous.

Thing is, to get into these places and meet these tribes, you'll probably have to pass through Lagos and not get yourself killed. Orks in Lagos don't care much if you're a fellow ork; they care if you respect their tribe. Igbo and Yoruba are big, but the Oshogbo and Warri have plenty of orks in town that you could easily get help from if you talk right and pay your respects (pun intended).

- The Daka are ork-heavy and have gotten into bed with Ares, making them well-armed and open to a little cultural shift. Ares orks are finding a lot of work getting in with the locals even though they still don't blend perfectly, they still fit better than some Knight-knockoff exec.
- Traveller Jones

Nigeria is interesting and welcoming, but trolls and orks in the Congo Tribal Lands are a breed apart. Possibly in a literal sense. Put on your lifting belt, because things are about to get heavy.

In the early days of goblinization, many orks and trolls fled their homes. Finding a place that accepted them wasn't easy, so many traveled extremely long distances. Despite its war-torn history and generally wild (as in nature) reputation, central Africa gained a large number of orks and trolls who just wanted to be away from the world and all the drekheads who filled it. As the tribes in this region began to connect to develop a unified system based on the core idea of "we don't want certain people here," these trogs found themselves

facing another group that at first made them think they needed to pack up again. Instead, they were happily taken in. Their strength and resilience were honored, and they were looked at as not only strong warriors, but wise sages who knew when it was better to take to the road than fight. Their multicultural backgrounds created quite a mixing pot of social and cultural norms, but it seemed to become an honor to learn as many of your peers' traditions as possible and build on your honor to take up with them and their ways.

Over the years, this made for a very open culture that accepts newcomers if they're willing to act in a similar fashion. But the open culture is not the most amazing part of life as a trog in the tribes of the Congo. Dr. Wilcox Graham is a little-known scientist studying orks and trolls around the world. He focuses on analyzing the biology of the species and abolishing long-held myths about our kind. His work in the CTL has shown some serious errors in lifespan estimations for orks and trolls, with estimates for the latter breaking every report provided by earlier "scientists." (The quotes are an ode to Doc Dub, because he's connected every research program before him to some of the shadiest doctors on the planet, many currently employed by our favorite genocidal health corp, Paladin Medical Group.) The good Dr. Wilcox reports "members of the *ingentis* and *robustus* sub-type" who arrived in the CTL in the early to mid-'30s, already in their teens, twenties, and a few in their thirties, all of whom are still alive.

Yes, that means orks and trolls that are between sixty-five and eighty-five years old—well beyond expectations for orks and up into the realm of venerable for trolls, but these trogs are still hale and hearty. Quite the surprise to many in the world who see orks at forty already suffering the effects of old age. I don't have the science background to understand his work, but he attributes a lot of it to their diet and where they live. The rich, pure mana of the Congo, along with the pure environment, nourishes them in a way that orks in urban, and even first-world rural, areas just don't get. If I read his hypotheses correctly, he actually puts orks into a life expectancy category equivalent to humans, and trolls look to have the same speculative longevity as dwarves. Interesting stuff. I know plenty of corps and other interested parties that would love to get their hands on this data.

- Several groups have gone after Wilcox for his work, but he always has the Congo to fall back to.
- Butch

- He's also got a small group of warriors who are dedicated to protecting him in the Congo. He needs to hire private security elsewhere. He dips into our ranks frequently, since he can't trust most of the megacorp security companies.
- 0rkCE0

Since I am mentioning Africa, I'll point out one place orks aren't welcome: Asamando. The wendigo HMHVV variation isn't as simple as vampires or ghouls; it ended up somewhere in the middle, with the worst of both worlds and virtually zero resemblance to the ork that turned. They don't even like letting in non-Infected orks for fear of infection. Their primary airport has warnings everywhere, including some pretty gruesome images of wendigo that I'm not entirely sure came from a photographer who survived the encounter.

ORKS OF AMAZONIA

POSTED BY: FAVELA CORONA

Bully! Thanks for the tap. You wanna know where to be in Amazonia if you got tusks or horns, I'm the guy to ask. And you did. So that makes you in the know.

- If he wants onto JackPoint, don't do it. I like it here, and I'd get kicked after I killed him.
- /dev/grrl

When headed down to the land of the Amazon, you got two good options: Metrópole de Amazonia and Manaus. They're both very different, and I need to give you a bit more detail before you go wandering into trouble. In case you got a short attention span, I'll give you the bad news first.

Metrópole de Amazonia, a.k.a. the Rio de Janeiro-Sao Paulo sprawl, is a two-faced slitch. On one hand, you have the favelas of Rio, where orks live like kings. Well, kings of the favela, but they still get treated with respect and a touch of fear. Then you have the rest of the sprawl. The further you get from the favelas, the more suspicious people get about orks. Due to the reputation they have in the favelas, they just aren't really welcomed anywhere else.

Most places aren't openly hostile, and if you've got an accent that they can tell isn't local, they might cut you some slack, so definitely don't try to play like you're a local. Walk like an outsider, talk like an outsider, and let them treat you like an outsider. Some spots, particularly those close to the favelas, are actively hostile to orks. You see, suspicion farther out, hostility closer in. Several local organizations violently try to keep the orks inside the favelas and feel any move outside them is an attempt to spread their influence.

- And these organizations aren't like Humanis. It's not just humans trying to keep the orks down, it's everybody who doesn't want them expanding their power base.
- Picador

Interesting thing about trogs in Metrópole: They aren't a united front. Orks don't look at trolls in the big-brothers-in-the-struggle kind of way. Instead, they push them out and treat them like garbage just like a lot of the world does. In fact, a troll in the favelas is probably the property of one of the tougher orks. I'm not actually certain, but I think this is one of the only places around where the trolls and orks aren't working side by side to fight the oppressive system they live in. Probably because the orks have found a way to join the oppressive system.

The favelas of Metrópole can be a good place to hide out, as most of the time the authorities have no desire to venture into them. And while you might not find a lot of troll kinship there, you at least need to know where you can find things that are the right size, as a lot of the shacks in the favelas are really small. The **Complexo de Alemão** is one of the favelas the authorities especially avoid, and in the shadow of the gondola line is a flophouse run by a troll known as Palheiro. She doesn't have many beds—like I said, buildings in the area are small—but she is conscious enough of her size to keep four troll-sized beds in her rooms. She also can tell you where to find food in troll-sized portions.

- There's an eternal struggle in the favelas—if people there were any good at doing legitimate business, they would have moved on to work in a nicer part of the sprawl by now. If they're still operating in a favela, how competent can they be? Or, to ask a related question, if they're good at their job—good enough to make a decent income stream—what secondary motivation is keeping them in the favela?

  Palheiro seems to be good at her job. You won't get robbed in your sleep staying at her place, and the cleanliness is good enough to keep the bugs from being everywhere. So why hasn't she moved on to some other neighborhood or establishment where she could make more, in nicer conditions? The two obvious answers in these cases is shadow work or drug trafficking, and in Palheiro's case it seems to be the former. She keeps her eyes and ears out for talent staying at her place, and she can connect them to fixers with available work if her guests are sufficiently impressive.
- Marcos

- Are we really at the point where we ask why someone doesn't abandon their home and neighbors for a little more money?
- Chainmaker

- Go to the favela, then see if you understand.
- Marcos

- Yeah, I'm from Lambeth. Shove it up your arse.
- Chainmaker

Now for the good news—and it's not just good for orks, it's good for all, as long as you're not a nature-destroying monster. Manaus has a vibe where everyone is welcome, and the orks (since that's what we're focused on here) tend to be some of the nicest because all the ones with attitude and anger issues live happily and violently in the favelas of Rio. Well, not really. It's more like they get kicked out or socially ostracized until they go find a better place to act like hoodlums.

Thing about Manaus is that it's truly an Awakened city. There are very few parts of this metropolis not arcanely grown, enchanted, or empowered, so it's important to understand and accept every aspect of the Awakening, including every metatype, metavariant, and sapient species out there. The mentality in this place is different than any other city I've visited. My tusks didn't draw any more attention than the horse head on the centaurs, and definitely didn't get me the ire they usually do.

- This guy is a piece of work. He is talking about the same Manaus, right? Major metro, extensive shadows because the corps there all play nicety-nice on the surface?

  Is this guy a wageslave? I thought we only allowed pros here.
- Stone

- Favela Corona isn't a wage slave, but he did grow up in some really unpleasant places, and a city like Manaus is going to seem idyllic to him.

  As with all things here, take it with a grain of salt.
- Pistons

Since Bully mentioned this was about all trogs I'll mention that trolls have a great opportunity here. Because most of the construction is techno-organic, it can be built, or adjusted, to suit all shapes and sizes. A lot of the public spaces are built big so everyone fits, but thanks to the adjustable nature of most of the construction, it has plenty of mid- and small-size structures where smaller races are more comfortable and trolls can be accommodated when necessary.

HERE BE TRØLLS! (SCANDINAVIAN UNION)

POSTED BY: NORTHERN HEAVY

While those Black Forest blokes get all the attention, and for a bit they were *the* destination of choice for trolls, the Scandinavian Union is once again finding trolls, especially the native giant metavarient, moving in rather than out. There are a couple of spots to focus on—I'm going to cover the island of Sifjorden, and I hear another poster will be covering the deranged Vikings of Avaldsnes.

One thing to make clear right off—while there may be some good spots for orks and trolls in the Union, this is no thanks to the local governments. They're still getting pushed around by some serious anti-meta forces, the same ones that led to their departure. The difference now is a local "hero" named Peikko Skarsgaard. Peikko has made a place and put the word out for trolls to return, or come, to this sacred homeland to show that hatred and tyranny do not control them.

There is a catch. This move is not back into the metropolitan areas, but instead into a rather remote locale on the south shore of Sifjorden in Norway. It's a mountainous peninsula that lacks real roads, but Peikko operates a transport service with a beat-up Osprey out of Narvik, or trolls can come on foot from any of the other cities on the island. It's not an easy journey, but it's worth it to join a community that's really good for trolls.

- The only bridge to the island comes through Finnsnes. The town had a decent vibe to it last year when Peikko started his efforts but a lot of anti-meta sentiment, especially anti-troll, has been developing. At least four trolls have been killed, and a half dozen others attacked, when they tried to pass through Finnsnes over the past few months.
- Traveler Jones

- Not to be the bearer of bad news, but those events cost twelve human lives, and a matching number sent to the local med centers. Tell the tale from both sides if you're going to tell it. Finnsnes has been bringing in additional private security because of the number of trolls passing through and the acts of violence they're committing on their way to their little troll paradise.
- Sunshine

- Flame war halted! Both sides have pointed out potentially skewed stories. Go get some facts or evidence before making any more comments here on JackPoint.
- Bull

Life isn't easy there, but as the community grows it's getting easier. More workers to take care of the land and help build homes and local structures. Mining the nearby hills is supplying some beautiful stone, and Peikko found several stonemasons early in his efforts who are making structures that are not only sized and built for trolls, even giants, but also beautiful.

That reminds me of a good point to bring up about Peikko Kotiin (that's the name of their community). The life of giants anywhere in the world is tough. Basic trolls have it rough, but add another meter in height, and fitting in anywhere becomes almost impossible. The construction in PK is all built with that in mind. Your average troll actually gets to feel small, or at least not cramped, in this place. Smaller folks feel downright tiny, as nothing in PK is built to accommodate them. This may be a spiteful bit of vengeance or just an effort to truly make the trolls feel like it's built with just them in mind, but it truly makes for a strange visit if you aren't over 2.5 meters.

PK is working very hard at being a self-sufficient community, so the list of other jobs in town are numerous, and many are remarkably boring. Because they are the only residents, there are plenty of roles you don't normally find trolls in. Some of the more advanced fields, where trolls are usually shunned, were harder to fill, but that was why Peikko worked to draw trolls from the Black Forest. They've been getting that advanced skillset for a long time.

- Interesting Northern didn't mention that Peikko's initial funding (which he is still using) came from Evo. They're also supplying the local stores and businesses. I get that it's normal because Evo is the meta-friendly mega, but they have no competition here. Strange. This seems to be just an Evo corporate town.
- 0rkCE0

- There's a shadow transport operation using only troll riggers that is based "near" PK. It's far enough to not look related to the town, but all the riggers live in PK. The cash they are raking in feeds back into this community and helps it fund the resources it doesn't have yet.
- Turbo Bunny

- Sorry Turbo, that's no shadow courier service. The rigs may not be registered and the pilots might be flying on phony SINs, but this complex of an operation screams corporate support, and since Evo's the only mega in town, my money's on them.
- Traveler Jones

- Just to be clear, this little movement isn't draining the Black Forest of their citizens. PK is small. Maybe five hundred trolls in total live there. The big draw is that every other metatype has a big ole' goose egg in the census numbers. They're growing steadily, but with only trolls welcome, their potential growth is limited, especially considering the financial and social position of most trolls. Getting from Seattle to PK could easily run over 50K for a troll, and I don't know many trolls with that kind of cash sitting around.
- Icarus

- Since it's already out there, I'll just open up. If you want to go there and don't mind taking a handout to help, hit up your local Evo HQ or office. Ask to be connected with Vice in Vladivastok. He's not a troll, but he's a contact point for getting a ticket. He used to run the shadows under the same handle but now acts as a worldwide Mr. Johnson for Evo.
- Hard Exit

- Fraggin' sellout.
- Hard Rock

- Fraggin' rookie.
- Hard Exit

- Who you callin' rookie?
- Hard Rock

- Walk a mile in my shoes. See the path I've taken. Then judge the course I choose.
- Hard Exit

- That's philo-drek. Life's tough. We all know it. But I'd breathe my last before I took on the corporate choker. Ork love for life!
- Hard Rock

- There is plenty of ork love in Evo, young chummer. It's kind of the corp's schtick. They're proving that they have some empathy for the metas they make their billions off of because they are letting these trolls live a life in their remote little town, away from a world that just doesn't get them yet. And may never. But Evo does.

  Damn, I sound like an Evo-mercial.
- 0rkCE0

I shouldn't just focus on trolls, even though I titled the article "Here Be Trølls!," because the orks have found a firm footing in the fjords of Finland. Say that ten times fast! Truth is, they actually flourish in a lot of places in the Scand U, though most of those places have one big thing in common: water. The orks in the Scandinavian Union have been welcomed en masse to work on the docks and boat crews all over the coastal towns and cities. Everywhere you find a wharf, you'll find a community of orks tied to working it.

And in that is both the boon and the bane.

Each town's ork community is like its own little gang. It's not the best analogy, and they don't deserve the negative connotation that comes with it, but they aren't welcoming of outsiders, especially other orks. Competition is fierce for work in these places, and every group wants to have the best and strongest. They often push out the weakest, who then try to go find another town to work in. They aren't seen in the best of light in most other places. These moves are sometimes strategic, and in order to better their home community, an ork will go to another community and sew discord. It's an interesting chess game between a group of individuals that most people just look at as big, dumb muscle.

The ones that are genuinely shunned and kicked out usually end up on shipping and fishing vessels. Better to go out to sea than to try to deal with the racism and segregation they find inland. On the boats, they rise in the ranks thanks to their strong work ethic and drive to be better. It doesn't hurt that they are rarely smaller than even the biggest other people on the boats. Trolls don't do well on ships, elves have the balance but not the bulk, and humans just aren't a match in the brawn department. The only meta group they struggle against is the dwarves. Strong backs and usually

a bit of tech skill gives them a one-two punch of assets. Luckily, most dwarfs have an aversion to being out on open water. Stubby legs and dense muscle are not a good combo if treading water becomes necessary.

Since most chummers reading this aren't going to be looking for work on the docks, or out on a boat, this information isn't just valuable to the locals. It's best to make your intentions crystal clear when you're getting chummy with local orks in the SU. Even if you're working a job to trash or grab a Maersk shipment, you're better off telling them that's what you're there for instead of trying to butter them up. Being too friendly makes them think you're working an angle from another community. Best bet is to get a sense of the room, determine who's working the dock and if anyone is operating as security, and work your way in with the dockworkers to gain info. Most would much rather you dig for dirt honestly and give them a chance to warn their guys of trouble rather than to go in and risk having to hurt someone unnecessarily.

- Watch out for Maersk Särskilda Skyddgrupp slags hanging out in the bars where you'd connect with the orks. They hang there to pick fights with tough sods and get info on ops going down against Maersk.
- Picador

All in all, though the Scand U isn't the best overall place to be a trog, they have some great niches. Then again, this is exactly the kind of thing that we are trying to get away from, right? Orks and trolls in stereotypical positions. Peikko Kotiin offers a wide range of opportunities for trolls, but it's isolated and segregated, which is probably what a lot of the world wants. And while the orks are the ones fighting hard for their communities, it's kind of making me think. This is basically keeping them focused on fighting amongst themselves, rather than trying to get out into the rest of Scandinavia.

Well. Didn't expect to come out of writing this with a suddenly different opinion, but I guess what those trolls told me is true. Writing the words gives them strength. It makes you think about them more than just saying them. It makes you own them.

If I'm going to see things in a new way, I guess this is the best place to drop the data. Runners of the world, here's a place that needs some hooders and anarchists. Hit the Scand U and help the trolls and orks get the place they deserve, not the place they've been put.

- Interesting turn of events. I'm glad he left that for the end and didn't go back and rewrite the whole thing. Seeing someone change for the better is rare in this world, rarer in this line of work, and ultra-rare on this VPN. Good on you, Northern.
- Stone

- Northern's dead. Sent this off, went to Scandinavia, got as far as Finnsnes, and found out just how rotten that town has become. RIP chummer. Your words are forever here. And in the Resonance Realms, if 'cat is to be believed!
- Slamm-0!

AVALDSNES

POSTED BY: 2XL

I'm not going to tell you how to feel about these guys, because I'm not sure how I feel. I've heard all the arguments—that they're living up to the worst stereotypes about orks and trolls and just providing fodder for people who want to believe we are nothing but savage brutes. That they are showing how orks and trolls don't have to play by the rules of society, and they can follow their own rules and build something strong and functional. That they have built independence and strength for themselves. That they are in danger of moving from the status of easily ignored gnat to that of annoying mosquito, so they are in danger of being swatted by the powers that be.

As I said, I'm undecided. Part of me rolls my eyes whenever I hear about them. And part of me wants to run off and join them. I'll try to present facts as clearly as I can so you all can decide what you will decide.

Just off the southwest coast of Norway sits the island of Karmøy, and toward the northern end of the island is the village of Avaldsnes, home of Harald Fairhair, the first king of Norway. Get ready for a time warp if you go there—there is not an ARO in sight, and modern architecture is shunned. I'm not saying they don't have the Matrix, but they like to keep it subtle. If you need the Matrix, you use your commlink screen, or perhaps an ARO visible only to you. A few buildings have sod roofs, and very few of them are taller than three stories. The most imposing building is a stone church with a large square tower. This is St. Olav's Church, originally built as a Christian church in fourteenth century. It retains its Christian functions while accommodating a broader base of worship, most notably to the older gods of Norway.

The thing about the village, though, is that it pales in comparison to the boats.

At most times, a fleet of longships is docked in the Karmsundet strait. They ape the appearance of ancient Viking watercraft but are considerably larger and rely on neither sails nor oars—they have a number of engines lining the sides to mimic the maneuverability oars can provide. They are considerably faster than longships, of course, as a top speed of ten knots would never do for modern combat. And that's what they're used for.

The orks and trolls of Avaldsnes have decided to reclaim their Viking heritage, by which they mean raiding whoever the hell they feel like. Other villages in the Scandinavian Union are the easiest for them to reach, but sometimes they make their way to the British Isles or Allied German States just for variety, and to keep the government heat off them.

Which leads to one of the mysteries of this village—why is it tolerated? There is no mystery about it. The ships have been identified in well over a dozen raids, everyone knows where the ships dock, and none of the residents of Avaldsnes are exactly subtle about how the town's economy works. So why doesn't the government sweep in and take care of what is clearly nothing more than a band of pirates?

Because, according to many rumors, they are much more like privateers. The very first raids by the Avaldsnes Vikings were rather haphazard in their targeting. They mainly just shot up whatever buildings were near the shore and then ran ashore to see if there was anything valuable inside that hadn't been destroyed by the barrage. It didn't take long, though, before they became more targeted, focusing on corporate warehouses and displaying a knack for hitting especially valuable goods, including new consumer electronics, designer fashions, and legal, semi-legal, and illegal pharmaceuticals. Millions of nuyen worth of

goods have been destroyed and/or stolen. Not at all coincidentally, the western Norway black market has been thriving, the quality of buildings in Avaldsnes has been improving, and their fleet of ships is growing.

- Here's one of the tricks about this place: The longships they have are not any known model, and there are no records on who is selling them to Avaldsnes. The town has no ship construction yards, so they aren't building them themselves. Where are they coming from?
- Sounder

Officially, the Scandinavian Union government has labeled the town as lawless and has cut off all government support from the area. Given that they are active pirates whose base is well known, the pirates seem quite fortunate to have gotten off with that fate, and the German and UK governments, as well as representatives of other states in the Scandinavian Union, have filed multiple protests. If these protests continue to fall on deaf ears, expect the aggrieved parties to take action beyond paper filing.

The Vikings, of course, respond to these protests by saying "bring it on." Their leader, who calls himself Hardrada after an old Viking king, has gone to great lengths to declare Aveldsnes as a "free city" (or free village, whatever) and say that his people will live as they will, according to an old code, and none will stop them. It's a bold tactic, because while Hardrada and his crew have some nice ships and a reputation as fierce fighters, they're sitting ducks. If anyone takes a mind to it and doesn't care about pissing off the Scandinavian Union, they could take the whole village out. As far as I'm concerned, it currently is a question of "when," not "if."

In case you hadn't guessed yet, the reason this is posted here is that the vast majority of these neo-Vikings are orks and trolls, so Aveldsnes is a very ork- and troll-friendly town. There are a number of theories as to why there are so many orks and trolls there, ranging from the innocuous and most likely true (Hardrada is an ork, and he brought in his friends first, and they brought in their friends, and so on, and trogs know trogs) to the offensive (orks and trolls like violence, so of *course* they're attracted to this group!).

- Yes, saying orks and trolls are innately violent is offensive, but recognizing that marginalized groups often have so few options open to them that they more frequently turn to illegal activities is simply accurate.
- Sunshine

So the good news is, there is a safe and prosperous haven for orks and trolls off the western coast of Norway, where it never gets too hot but the ocean keeps it from getting too cold. The only bad news is that some corp or nation might decide to smash the whole thing to bits at any point.

YAKUT'A TOLD ME THIS PLACE WAS SO COLD

POSTED BY: NEILB4M3 (A.K.A. SILK ROAD CYBER)

Title's a little funny, but it just made sense for this place. Fraggin' Siberia! This place has had a bad rap for millennia and the transition of power to a native spirit did not change the local flavor much. Which makes sense, because it's a local spirit. Huh, never thought of it that way.

Anywho, we're talking about orks and trolls and the places they live around the world. I was popping around chat spots and happened to run into Clockwork. Not the best of sources, but a hobgoblin's an ork right? He mentions that the JackPoint crew is building a little data drop on orks and trolls. He's all piss and vinegar about it, because he's sure everyone who's going to post will toss up some fluff or talk out their rectum, or worse, not be an ork or a troll. As if the views of others aren't important. Well, I step out, swap a few bits of code, and swagger back in with the baddest Neil the Ork Barbarian persona out there. Nobody but an ork would rock this bad boy, right? I hit up Clockie, start talking smack in Or'zet, get all "My grandma can whoop your grandma" on him, and boom, he's spewing garbage again. My angle has worked like a charm. He gets back on the trog-talk topic and whallah, I'm in and offering a report on Yakut. Why Yakut? Because it's Yakut, and trolls and orks have no problem fitting right into the rest of the freakshow. No offense intended. I just mean the place is crazy, but in a way that's good for a group of people that need a place they can be understood and not feared. So, Clockie, when you read this, know that "NeilB4M3" is as smooth as they come. I'm a "drek-born smoothie," as you called us, but

I won't hold that against you. Seems no one here likes you, either!

- This slot is dead!
- Clockwork

- SRC was officially accepted as a member of the JackPoint VPN as of two seconds ago. Touch him and say goodbye to your access, "Clockie"!
- Slamm-0!

- Um, I don't think we voted on that?
- Glitch

- I vote yes.
- Bull

- You FUCKERS! This is bullSHIT! You can't be ...
- Clockwork

- Banhammer applied.
- Bull

- Why'd you do that? I believe he was about to say "any more awesome than you currently are!"
- Slamm-0!

- Don't push it, Slamm-0! That move puts you on thin ice, and it's getting warm in here.
- Glitch

Credentials time, though I'm sure to have won over a few people just for wrackin' on Clockwork. I'm a top-tier hacker spending most of my time working for the caravans on the Silk Road. I've done scores of diversions up into Yakut because I'm not a desk-decker. I did my time ducking bullets with various acronymed organizations but found the pseudo-shadow life more my speed when my employers were defunded. As I said, I'm human. I'm not an ork poser or a troll groupie. I just know when a group of people deserve more credit than public perception offers. And let me say one thing right off the bat: I won't use the "T" word. It's not mine to use. I know plenty of orks and trolls who toss it around like it's nothing, but I respect my place in that banter.

As for Yakut: This place is built for hard people. Orks and trolls certainly fit that bill. They're as tough as they come, but even they occasionally get chewed up and spit out by mama Yakut. The environment is a mix of flat frozen hell, hilly chilly hades, and frag-nuts cold mountainous netherworld. When breaking a chunk off Mother Russia, they couldn't have chosen a much harsher piece of property. Guess that's what you get when the one helping you break off that chunk is a spirit who could care less about the temperature as long as the mana is warm. Point about the environment is that most of Yakut is open land and really cold. Several cities are clustered along the southern border and the northern coasts, but much of that land in the middle is unpopulated.

By metahumans, at least. The wilds of Yakut are the reason for the divisiveness in the nation. The locals made the deal with Vernya to break free of Russia, but after they got their wish, they suddenly realized they weren't the only ones who claimed this region as part of their heritage. Vernya knew about the massive shifter population well before the locals, and they knew who they'd side with should disagreements arise. The shapeshifters became Vernya's answer to the KGB, and Yakut gained a rebellion.

This is where the orks and trolls have found a place to fit in. Shifters are tough. Trolls and orks are tough. Vernya has her powerhouses. The Sagan Zaba (that's the rebels, though don't let them hear you call them that) are luring orks and trolls to be their powerhouses, and they're also training those orks and trolls to be more than fighting machines. Technical skills, mechanical skills, computer skills, tactics, and medicine. Everything you can think of is being offered to the muscles of the meta world that are willing to come join their cause. Since this isn't an advertisement, but instead informative, I'll point out that a lot of orks and trolls are going there, getting training, and then slipping south to the Silk Road and hopping a caravan back to Vladivostok. Not all, but some. Enough stick around that the Sagan Zaba doesn't put restrictions in place to keep them there, but once they leave, they'd better never return. The Sagan Zaba have a classic Russian mean streak and offer those who desert a slow death being drawn and quartered, or a fast death being fed to their boars. And yes, they have mounts big enough to drag a troll.

- The merc unit, Amur Tigers, are known to send their trainees into Yakut. Twice. Once is to engage with the Sagan Zaba. The second time, their "proving", as they call it, is to hunt shifters. They lose plenty of rookies, but the ones who pass those two tests prove they have all the skills needed to be among this elite merc unit.
- Picador

That's big picture stuff with a pretty dark angle to it. There are better bright points. Novy, for one. The wandering city takes all who can handle the challenging life it offers. Moving every few months means not just a nomadic life, but a life where hard work, the work of building and taking down a small city, occurs almost as often as the cycles of the moon. The orks and trolls in Novy often find themselves splitting their lives between build up and tear down, working to keep order and help protect the nomad city from implosion or division. Novy is a city of sales, and where there is selling, there is undercutting and theft. Security and policing has to fall on someone, and who better than the biggest guys around who don't have as much trouble dealing with shifters when they're the ones causing the trouble.

Bright point two is also around Novy, but still quite the separate entity. As Novy attracted more and more orks looking for work, it developed a bit of an overpopulation issue. Too many orks, meant that between moves, there were too many to use as security, and even during the moves, there weren't enough jobs to do all at once for all the orks who wanted work. The extras didn't have anywhere else to go, and after too many altercations in their drunken downtime, they were politely asked to leave the city. Not happy with this, but not going to ruin it for everybody, they pooled resources alongside a little begging off their employed brethren and purchased tents and mounts, both riding stock and breeding stock, because they had a long-term plan.

Now, before I go much further, let me clear up my use of "mounts." I use the term because I'm sure you've never heard of a bajanai or a hinkon. Both are Awakened variants of the more well-known Yakut horse. The bajanai is a bulky beast of burden, easily doubling the size of the short, stocky, Yakut horse, but similar in general appearance, though its snout is more compact and neck slightly longer. The hinkon is about the same size, but its body is covered with rhino-like plating, its neck is thick and short, and its mouth has goring tusks like a boar and razor-sharp teeth. These are the "mounts" I'm talking about.

This schism occurred over a decade ago. While they had their ups and downs, this group of orks has made good on their plans. Because with horses and tents they have been able to stay close to Novy as it moved. After a few years of following close and growing in number, the leaders of this band of ork riders approached the city's governing body. They had already been performing a valuable task without asking anything of the city in order to prove their worth. They scouted ahead and located suitable settling areas within the proper traveling distance, rode to nearby settlements to spread the word that Novy was coming, and then patrolled the surrounding area to keep out any large forces or natural problems, like the Awakened bears native to the region. The city recognized their contributions, saw the value of their efforts, and made them an official division of the city's police force. It was a great day for them, but an even better day for the rest of the world, because they went from calling themselves Toskanskiye Naletchiki to Novyy Karaul. The first was a little funny if you had a hundred-year-old sense of humor, but both showed that orks can be so unoriginal.

The force now accepts new riders, but you have to spend at least a year working inside Novy. After that, you can ask to join their ranks and start being trained to fight while you ride. Those who aspire to join, often purchase a bajanai from the traders in Novy to ride while the city is on the move. While the city is stable, they usually lend the mount out to the Novyy Karaul so that it can be trained properly. It's an expensive investment that doesn't always pay off because the Novyy Karaul don't claim responsibility to training accidents.

And since I don't just keep to one side of a story, I can also provide a little insight into life as an ork or troll in the Vernya controlled parts of Yakut because it's relatively simple. Vernya trusts her shifters. The shifters don't trust metahumans. By some math property I learned in school and don't remember, Vernya, therefore, doesn't trust metahumans. It's not completely universal, but the last ones she helped out and made a deal with went and got an artifact so that they could rebel against her. That sort of thing doesn't build trust.

Vernya may not trust metas, but she trusts instinct. And survival is a very basic instinct. Doing things to survive is a reliable expectation, especially when those things are more of a reaching goal, than a basic one. Vernya has no problem letting anyone live in the cities she controls, but when you step out of line, you're shipped off to the mines. Literally. Vernya uses manual labor in her mining efforts in order to preserve the order of nature in her realm. No machines whatsoever, just

good old-fashioned picks, shovels, blood, sweat, and tears.

And guess who her favorite metahumans are to send off to these mining deathcamps? Yup, orks and trolls! Though dwarves are actually at the top of the list, but they manage to slip through her fingers more often when the time comes to pay the piper. Advantages of being small, I guess. Or maybe it's that worldwide network of friends they have, but that's for a different write-up.

So, take this as the warning. Head into Yakut at your own risk. Don't cross anybody (or at least get caught crossing them), and make sure to bring warm clothes.

- Anyone want to apologize for questioning me on letting this guy in?
- Slamm-0!

- I'm not entirely sure we need him, but he torqued off Clockwork just to get in, so he's all right by me.
- Kane

- Got a little addition here, since Neil didn't get into the action in the capital city of Yakutsk. I don't blame him—getting anything into or out of that town is not easy. Recently, though, I made contact with an ork living in the city, and we had a number of chats over the past few months. Here is an edited transcript of some of those chats. Some of it is frustrating elliptical, I know, but that's what has to happen when ruthless shapeshifting spies are everywhere.

  And if they're here, reading this, all I have to say is: Hi! Fuck you!
- Glitch

Koloff: There are people here who say it is just like any place. You have to learn the rules, adapt to the circumstances, and then you may survive.

Glitch: Is that not true for you?

Koloff: There are many places where it is not true. It is ridiculous to think that all places have the same level of difficulty for living. Ask people who lived in San Francisco under Saito, and then not under Saito. Was it the same, both times? Of course not. Not all places are the same.

Glitch: So in some places, you have to adjust. Like in Saito's San Francisco, metahumans would have a very difficult time—most would have gotten right out, but some could not, so they would live in hiding or try to find a way to be useful to the regime, which means they're supporting a regime that's working against their people. Those are tough circumstances. Have you ever seen circumstances like that?

Koloff: Tolstoy, he said that all happy families are alike, and unhappy families are different. He is only half right. There are many ways to be happy, and there are many ways to be unhappy. Saito expelled people, but there are other places where metas are just mistrusted. They may like to leave, but leaving is not easy, so they are forced to stay in a place where people want them to work for their livelihood but don't trust them with any of the jobs that would support them. People must find a way to live where people do not want them to live but also are forcing them to stay. It is a different way of being unhappy.

Glitch: Can people really be forced to stay anywhere? Trucks and planes bring in goods, there are various vehicles that can be stolen, and everyone has feet. In one of these places you're talking about, couldn't people leave at some point if they really wanted to?

Koloff: Oppression is a science. Really. There are people who have studied it carefully. They understand the right amount of terror to inflict on people so that they live in a perpetual state of anxiety without being driven to complete chaotic insanity. Make sure everyone knows the stories of someone who attempted to flee and was immediately shot. Conduct random interrogations, where four out of five people are simply questioned, and the fifth is tortured. The people who were simply questioned begin to feel like the lucky ones.

If you do this correctly, you induce a state of perpetual anxiety. Do you know what people who are anxious all the time really like to do? Drink. What you need to do, then, is make sure they have a steady supply of their favorite native liquor, and they keep themselves in a nice drunken stupor.

<Apparently those last paragraphs got a little too specific for Yakut censors, and Koloff was off the Matrix for about two weeks. Our conversations continued shortly thereafter.>

- Koloff certainly understands the basic tactics, but one thing his description is missing is information on how to spread stories about people who got away. You can have a State-run media, which provides certain benefits, but also downsides, as people learn to mistrust it. Double agents, spies, and infiltrators play a critical role in any authoritarian regime, and one of those roles is to get information out—telling stories at the right time, leaking

information that the State supposedly doesn't want you to see, and other things along those lines.

- Sunshine

Glitch: I read an interesting paper recently about physical appearance and identity.

Koloff: What made it interesting?

Glitch: It examined the psychological ramifications of the Year of the Comet, specifically the effect on changelings, people whose appearance radically changed. They found higher instances of depression and schizophrenia among these individuals, as the change in appearance messed up their conception of themselves and sometimes caused an entire break with reality.

Koloff: Hmm. Interesting. But I assume some of this is because the changes are out of their control, yes? If you decide to re-invent your appearance on your own, it can lead to a stronger psyche, not a weaker one.

Glitch: Good point. Imagine, though, someone who changed their look so often that they lost all sense of what their "real" self was. What kind of effect do you think it could have on a person?

Koloff: Uncertainty. You may not know just who your actual self is, and that could lead to self-doubt. That could put you in the position of many bullies and narcissists, where you lash out at others to cover your own internal sense of weakness.

Glitch: Would that lashing out be random?

Koloff: Not necessarily. The easiest thing for a bully to do is attack the weak, those who are lowest on the social structure. That means if your personal doubt is focused on your own physical appearance, you may lash out at those who are often reviled for their physical appearance. By dominating them, you assert that you must be less reviled than they, for you can control them.

Glitch: Doesn't sound strictly logical.

Koloff: The way neuroses play out often is not. They respond to psychological need, not logic.

- That's pretty theorizing and all, but maybe too detailed. People like power, and many who are good at getting it know how to divide people to serve their own ends. It can be as simple as that, without the psychoanalysis.
- Sounder

<There was a gap of another few weeks before a heavily encrypted file, with no signature, arrived in my inbox. The nature of the encryption algorithm convinced me it was from Koloff. It is the last I have heard from him.>

A PARABLE

There once was a wolf who decided to be a shepherd. Chasing down sheep and avoiding shepherds and their dogs was wearying, and it would all be much easier if the wolf had its own supply of sheep. There were obstacles, of course, the main one being that sheep don't like wolves, and any gathering and caring for them would not be easy, since the sheep would be attempting to run away all the time, and their constant anxiety might keep them from living and reproducing as needed. The wolves thought about what they could do make the sheep like them better, but then they came up with the answer: bears. Bears are bigger and stronger than wolves. Sheep should be even more scared of the bears than the wolves. Of course, the wolves would nudge this tendency along. They would make posters depicting the bears as wild, slavering animals. They would make sure the sheep reacted only with fear as soon as they came in sight of the bears. They would not necessarily like the wolves more, but the sheep would know the wolves were not bears. And if the wolves would sometimes protect them from the bears, taking a few out who were judged to be the worst threats—well, the sheep could live with that.

- No one really wants to go to Yakutsk right now, and while the details are scant, and this is just one man's subjective and concealed opinion, it's a strong enough warning to really stay away if you're a trog.

  Unless, of course, you're the kind of person who likes jumping into the maw of danger.
- Glitch

PARADISE FOR A PAIR OF DICE

POSTED BY: CARIB ORK

When you're looking to make a haven for your people and the only thing you ever seem to have on your side is luck, that's the game you play until it runs out. Back in 2074, Brig "Big Jimmy" James was an average, everyday craps dealer in Atlantic City. He had a cool nickname, sure, but it was earned because his name was confusing and he had a bit of a weight issue. What he lacked in spectacular looks and personality he made up for with a drive to see orks around the world come together as a race and stop marching to the beat of society's drum. It was a lofty goal, and he had no real plan to achieve it outside preaching on Matrix forums, and that got him nothing but targeted by Matrix trolls, and not the horned kind.

What Brig had on his side were luck and a solid understanding of several gambling games, craps being his favorite. Despite the fact that he wasn't supposed to, Brig often dropped advice on gamblers at his tables, especially those who were big tippers, seemed down on their luck, or had tusks. He was reprimanded frequently and lost his place at Caesar's and ended up covering a table at Pharaoh's East, a terrible knock-off of the Luxor in Vegas. It was here that his life changed forever.

As the legend goes, an elf in a deep-red fedora and black trench sat down at his table on a particularly stormy New Jersey night. His luck was poor, and Big Jimmy offered a few timely suggestions. The elf's luck turned around, and when it came time to tip Big Jimmy, the elf wired him property deeds for a massive chunk of Cayman Brac. Big Jimmy took the deeds and used the limited resources he had to buy a ticket to Grand Cayman. And the rest is history.

I like the legend. Makes it more romantic for all the orks who have come to Ork Brac in order to find a more peaceful and calmer life. It's a struggle, don't get me wrong, but it's still island life. Thing is, it ain't true, and not knowing the real story and being in our line of work can be hazardous to your health.

This piece of the Cayman Islands belonged to Sir Archibald Wimship. He was a British aristocrat with too much money and too many closely related ancestors, but a brilliant scientific mind for a short time. In the mid-'60s,

he pushed the field of inter-species communication, successfully claiming Dunkelzahn's bequest of forty million nuyen and a Cayman Island. Shortly after the success of his project, the technology was stolen from him by one of the megacorps, leaving him to grow extremely paranoid. After the loss of his lab and his work, he sunk the vast majority of his fortune into owning Cayman Brac, the farthest east of the Cayman Islands, which he chose from Dunkelzahn's hoard. His ownership didn't give him a big empty island, something his paranoia required he start with, so he used his own vast resources and the nuyen left by the Big D to buy most of the residents off the island. He didn't manage to evict everyone—there were several holdouts who valued the place they lived on the island more than any amount of money to get off the island, who chose not to sell. The ones who chose to stay were almost entirely made up of orks and trolls. They valued the peace and safety that had been their family's birthright since Dunkelzahn first took over governance of the islands in the '20s. They'd had a place to be safe for half a decade. He let them stay, partly out of a lack of options, he wasn't the violent type, and partly because they seemed to calm his paranoia.

- So someone collected on the communication bequest, and the Draco Foundation didn't say anything?
- Sunshine

- The DF stopped being overly public about the will after a few years. It just wasn't worth the string of cons and BS artists who popped out of the woodwork every time the world was reminded of the Big D's will.
- Frosty

- That one just seems like a big one.
- Sunshine

- It is. But then it got quickly "stolen" by a megacorp. This screams the DF grabbing it based on the secret will of Dunkelzahn.
- Plan 9

- Secret will?
- Skinner

- NOOOO!!! Don't get him started. Chat elsewhere you two. The conspiracy forum is <here>.
- Glitch

Thing about Wimship is, his paranoia should have developed earlier. Long before he ever created a miracle of modern science and got into the crosshairs of the megas, his family had been targeted for the collection of interesting heirlooms they possessed. Most of the pieces just held collector value for several centuries before magic came back to the world, but then suddenly had power. Prior to Archibald, the Wimship family had strong connections to many of Europe's secret societies. Archibald wanted nothing to do with these, but he found himself targeted by them. As it happened, every attempt on his life took another member of his family. He became the sole inheritor of the entire Wimship fortune.

Sounds lucky, eh? It was. A luck provided by a pair of bone dice etched with runes. One of those many heirlooms that just happened to be Awakened artifacts. Lots of money, plus lots of crazy, plus lots of mojo, and now his own private island, led Archibald to move his family's vast collection to the island.

- This screams dragon manipulation. As if Dunkelzahn wanted this guy to get one of his islands and then bring all of his family's artifacts to it.
- Kia

Now we get to 2074 again, when Big Jimmy is playing the stickman on a quiet Wednesday afternoon. An old man, sophisticated British gent, sits down and starts shooting. It's quiet, and Jimmy, the boxman (it's like the dealer but craps doesn't have cards), and the old fellow are shooting the breeze. Jimmy's talking about his dreams of a safe place for orks, the boxman is constantly warning Jimmy to zip it and focus, and the old man just listens.

The day rolls on and business is about to pick up when the old man poses Brig with a bet. Player on player, shoot to win with a bit of street craps. The boxman bails, not about to get fired for Brig, and the old man pulls out the bone dice.

He handed that luck right off to Big Jimmy, lost his bet offering Big Jimmy an island where he might find a place for that dream, and then dies in an Atlantic City hospital later that night from the complications of cancer he had been battling for years.

Now, Brig didn't get all this without complications, and that's where we of the shadowy skills come in. Archibald left Brig a warning about the artifacts and the trouble that would come, and he also tasked him with protecting them. For Brig, it was like some exciting fantasy trid come to life

that has since turned into a serious drama with way more life-or-death decisions than he ever wanted to make in his life.

The island, particularly the entire eastern tip of the island, is entirely for orks and trolls. It's also where the artifacts are kept. Most of the trogs who live there are just there to enjoy life. A select few act as protectors of the artifacts hidden all around the island. Brig functions as a local leader and a coordinator for the guards while also locating suitable additional guards from the orks and trolls who come looking for a safe place. In order to move there, you have to be an ork or troll, and you have to have a "clean" record. That doesn't mean spotless, but you can't be currently wanted or under investigation, and you can't be a convicted murderer or other violent offender.

So it's not the place for everyone.

Though Big Jimmy's dream was for orks, he has happily let his efforts trickle over to their fellow outcasts, trolls. Because the ork population is so high, the trolls who come find themselves accepted on a more limited level. Even the renaming of the island to Ork Brac kind of leaves them out in the cold. This is growing to be less of an issue as time goes on, as Big Jimmy has already come to see the value in a more diverse population. It didn't take long for him to shift his ork-haven dream to a trog-haven dream.

- Wow! Way to paint that bullseye on these guys. A bunch of artifacts all on one island.
- Kane

- I'm sure Carib Ork avoided the details to not give away the secrets of the island, but the artifacts aren't just sitting out in the open. Archibald had many hidden, some even from Big Jimmy. The island's not huge, but if you don't know exactly where to look, you're going to run into some of the its guardians before you find an artifact.
- Frosty

- That's if you can make it to the island in the first place. Thanks to Big Jimmy's selection process, plenty of orks don't make the cut for the island's guardians, but they do get pushed over to Da Brag Rock, a pirate crew that operates around the Carib League but also functions like a coast guard for Ork Brac.
- Kane

- A lot of the trolls who get to the island have found work as shore crew for Da Brag Rock.
- Traveler Jones

- If only to state the obvious, there was a reason that Dunkelzahn purchased the Cayman Islands, and it wasn't to shelter his massive fortune. There's a mystic connection here, and Cayman Brac is at the crux of it all. The island has several alchera, and the manasphere there is quite powerful and heavily skewed toward orks. The number of adept births on the island is also above normal figures.
- Frosty

PARLEZ-VOUS FRANCAIS?

POSTED BY: GRAND BON JOUR

If your answer to the title question is "yes," find your way to France. Seriously. There are few nations in the world with the attitude of the French, and while that has soured the view of many other nations (and corporations), it isn't something they care to change. They have their culture and their preferences, and if you don't like it, c'est la vie.

The French view of metahumanity has been open and accepting since the earliest days of the Awakening. As an ork from France, I have never faced the kind of racial hostility that my kind from other places around the world have faced. It isn't in the day-to-day life of the French. Tusks don't make you less French. Horns don't make you less French. As a people we stand together and have for generations. I know we are mocked in other places as cowards who roll over when pushed, but that has never been the case. We value our lives. We acquiesce to the violent when wholesale destruction confronts us, so that we can survive and our fire-hearted can strike back to gain our freedom. We do this together, knowing that the most important fight is the one you can win.

As an ork from outside France you won't face persecution for being an ork. You may be disdained for being American, but not for being an ork. Move to France, join the culture, and while it takes time to overlook your funny American accent, your tusks will never slow you down.

I should warn you, though, that body modifications will get you ostracized. I know in other places around the world being modified makes you more than metahuman, but in France, those parts you lose—well, those had French blood, they were part of the French in you. Cyberlimbs are for amputees. When it's a matter of choice, you should take pride in your flesh.

For orks and trolls in France, life is hardly different, culturally, than for humans, elves, and dwarfs. Jobs, politics, and positions of power are held by those best suited for the placement, not for those who best fit a certain physical profile. We aren't held back by the irrational fears that others have placed on the new races.

And this culture isn't new. We're generations into this magic-filled world, and while I understand I have come from a more accepting culture, I cannot fathom the ignorance that is clung to within places that still revile orks and trolls—or elves and dwarfs, for that matter. Maybe that is why we are so hesitant with outsiders. We don't want the infection of their ignorance to corrupt us from within. We appear haughty and brusque, but instead we are simply protective of our evolved culture and viewpoints.

- Evolved culture? Didn't they invent the guillotine?
- Pennywarden

- Ah! Ignorance at it's finest.
- Thorn

- Seriously, Thorn. I'm not sure you get to jump on the French bandwagon just because you can impersonate them so well.
- Slamm-0!

- I'm simply pointing out that choosing a single era in history, and a device intended to instill fear in the masses—that worked quite well, I might add—is just a demonstration of the ignorance that breeds our inability to further ourselves.

  The guillotine is that era's equivalent of the Cold War atom bomb, the Great Ghost Dance at the turn of the century, and megacorporations today. They're all constructed to keep the masses in line and unwilling to rise up. They are tools that have problems but are not necessarily emblematic of the entire history of a culture.
- Thorn

Let's not be too rosy, though—France retains its share of problems for those who are not traditional humans. Our open minds have long drawn the attention of closed ones. We are targeted both by those forces within and international enemies that see orks and trolls as abominations and have nothing better to do than attack France in general and French trogs in particular in order to incite fear. They seem to hope that the inner ferocity that they see as the birthright of orks and trolls will come out and cause the French to join their terrible view. The most notable of these attackers are the Unity Foundation and Les Chasseurs de Monstres.

The Unity Foundation is a very nice-sounding group, originally founded in the Confederation of American States, that has spread internationally beyond the CAS and its half-brother nation, the UCAS. They work hard to massage their message to sound more pro-human than anti-meta, but in the end it all comes out the same. They're meta-haters, and they have a smaller, more violent sect among them that call themselves just Unity. These ones bomb cafés, attack government buildings, send letters laced with beta-anthrax to ork and troll policlubs, and perform all those dirty deeds that we expect from a bunch of racist terrorists.

Everything I've seen on them points to some connections to Alamos 20K. Part of the connection is a cross-pollination of racist scum that affiliate with both, but Unity gets quite a bit of funding from A20K fronts, or at least the same fronts that back A20K also back Unity. In their native CAS, they also have several compounds that support the training of both A20K members and Unity members.

- Really just looks like Unity is a 20k front. Better PR gets them in the door around the world, but they rise from the same cesspool.
- Butch

Les Chasseurs de Monstres—literally "Monster Hunters"—is a home-grown group of French domestic terrorists that see orks and trolls as storybook monsters. Their name is spot-on for the actions they take, literally hunting orks and trolls with some seriously old-fashioned style and flair. While that might sound like I say it with some kind of admiration, it's more of a statement to demonstrate the level of their insanity. Reports on their activities are common, and descriptions of the assailants are always easy to match to the group. Renaissance era wide-brimmed hat with accessories to match their Vashon Island Steampunk-line fashion armor, weapons modified to match the steampunk look, and black or red scarves covering the lower half of their faces depending on which color goes best with their outfit. The look is so distinctive that Vashon Island has been coordinating with local authorities to track sales of their armor line, but nothing seems to have come from the additional assistance.

The look is also incredibly expensive. Leading theories point to the richest members of France's aristocracy as prime suspects, but in public, there is no one who is actively outspoken against orks or trolls. They keep their bigotry behind closed doors and behind the masks and costuming they wear to commit their atrocities. The comical appearance of Les Chasseurs belies the seriousness of the problem. They have never lost a member, have been connected to the deaths of almost a score of people across France, and their "packs" are getting larger. Originally they were spotted in pairs or trios, but now they commonly hunt in groups of six or eight. Witnesses, because they always make a spectacle of their hunts, claim they appear to ritualistically offer the kill to a specific member every time they hunt in large groups. As an ork or a troll in France, be wary of them, and run if you see them coming.

- Rich kids out using daddy's nuyen to spread some hate and stand out. Getting augments wasn't enough. They need to kill to show how counter-culture they are.
- Mr. Bonds

- Run. Hah. I'll shred these fraggers. Never lost a member, huh. See how many they lose if they come after me.
- 2XL

- They never go after "hard" targets. Remember, orks and trolls in France live normal lives. They weren't raised on the streets in a kill-or-be-kill world like most other spots around the world. Being bigger only means it might take an extra hit or two to bring them down—it doesn't make them a skilled fighter, unlike their attackers. As for the spoiled rich kids idea, I've seen "hunt" footage from bystanders, and they're tactical in their precision. If they're rich kids, they have a trainer with black-ops experience getting them in line.
- Mihoshi Oni

FRONT RANGE "FREE" ZONE

POSTED BY: KLUDGE

By now, everyone has heard about Denver. Oh wait, maybe not, because most of the corps are downplaying it, and the governments don't want to announce how weak they really are. I'm sure someone around here is putting together something for us with more depth, but let me give a little surface view before I explain why this is an important place for trogs.

- Why are we taking data from a guy who may or may not have put a price tag on a bunch of our heads?
- Kane

- Because no one's collected or thoroughly proved it's legit.
- Bull

- Then why was it up in the first place?
- Sunshine

- JIC. CYA.
- Bull

In February, Ghostwalker gave the sector governments their walking papers. He also gave anyone not willing to swear fealty to him the same orders: Get out or else. He gave them a month to pack up and get out. In March, while many citizens had fled the free city, the UCAS and CAS governments were still clinging to the crazy idea that he was kidding, or he'd come around and work with them. When the deadline hit and Ghostwalker said, "Times up!," the UCAS and CAS switched over to trying to act tough, while the PCC and Sioux Nation quietly shifted their important government operations to locations just outside the FRFZ, the advantages to owning sovereign national soil around the free city. After a dramatic demonstration of why not to frag with a dragon, the UCAS and CAS were pulling out their aerial resources filled with what few troops and government assets they could manage.

Ghostwalker now claims control over all of the former Front Range Free Zone. All the sectors, all the citizens, all the property, all his. Of course, there are forces working against this and righteously pissed about it. The involved governments aren't happy, the megacorporations aren't happy, and the displaced citizens aren't happy. The first and the last are probably out of luck. Governments and individual citizens don't have much that Ghostwalker cares about, but the megacorporations are going to be hard to keep out. Even before the final ousting, Ghostwalker was in talks with several of the megas to stick around and maintain business and infrastructure support in the city. I haven't seen any logos or heard much more than rumors, but I'm sure several of the big boys are

already back and working to prove their value to the white wyrm.

- It's nice to see someone, or something in this case, sticking it to the corps. Gives me hope that one day we won't feel their boot on our throats.
- Hard Exit

- You won't. Eventually we all suffocate.
- Hannibelle

Now that you know, the next bit will make more sense. Over the past two months, orks and trolls from all over NorthAm have been working their way into Denver. Trogs are flocking to a place controlled by something as "monstrous" as them in hopes that Ghostwalker will create a more enlightened society in his fiefdom. The overall cultural setup of this new nation-state isn't fully developed, or even partially. It's still in flux, but if enough trogs arrive to shift the balance of numbers, they can certainly shift the social order in the process. Based on the numbers I've seen, this is huge and could definitely shift the numbers in favor of orks, who are far more supportive of trolls than anyone else.

- Really? The trogs are only headed there because they know Ghostwalker is a big proponent of "he who is the biggest badass gets the power" and they're looking to play off this attitude to their advantage.
- Stone

- Ghostwalker is the biggest badass. He's not going to let his kingdom fall to fighting and squabbling, or risk one of those powers rising to match his. Not that an ork or a troll could ever go mano-a-mano with GW, but you get my point.
- Hard Exit

- I'm sure there is a certain elf around town who might disagree on who is the biggest badass. Not necessarily agreeing, just saying.
- Frosty

There are a few current issues to consider if you think this move might be for you, and I'm not entirely sure that others who have jumped on the bandwagon have considered all these potential issues. I'll admit that it is currently a huge movement in North America. The number of smuggling runs pulling trogs out of Seattle's slums has skyrocketed over the past month. It took a little bit of time for word of mouth to spread, but once it did, every trog in town was hitting up the Cascade Orks and other smugglers to get them down to Denver. While many are calling this a fad, the fact that right now it's a one-way trip is giving it a solid foundation and preventing anyone who has already made the move from backing out. The one-way trip is definitely a hiccup in anyone's relocation plans, but it gets worse. As it stands, Ghostwalker is letting new citizens, willing to swear fealty to him, into the city with a very open-door policy. Part of this is to fill the voids left by those who fled, and the other is to fill his belly with fools. Sadly, we know how many fools exist in the shadows, and how many will try to push their luck for a chance at a buck.

Everyone who comes to Denver has to swear fealty to Ghostwalker before the dragon himself or one of his trusted advisors. All of his advisors are spellcasters with the ability to determine whether someone is being honest, and those who aren't being honest are getting rounded up by the ZDF. They don't get taken right away—that would scare others—instead they are let in, put on a list, and then grabbed in the middle of the night to be penned up for later dining by Ghostwalker. For those inside, it's not a state secret; they just keep it from newcomers. If you're headed in under false pretenses, know that they'll know you aren't loyal, and don't be wherever you claim to be staying when they come for you. If you're honestly ready to live in Ghostwalker's realm and follow his laws, you're golden and have plenty of opportunities left open by those who took off.

- I've gotten a few messages from folks in Denver, and they're saying the Resistance is alive and well, so you'll have places to hide out once you're inside. The ZDF is expanding its numbers and its efforts, but it's nowhere near enough to cover all of the FRFZ. There are plenty of folks who'll help you hide, and plenty of places to hide with all the government facilities and private citizens who thought it was better to start again elsewhere than to live under a dragon's reign.
- Kia

- I want to point out that all of those citizens who owned property and chose to flee sold their properties to Ghostwalker for a fair price. He didn't just kick them out and claim the land. He spent a lot of capital to give them a fair value.
- Mr. Bonds

- The number of property brokers who thought they would make mad nuyen by getting people to sell to them cheap before Ghostwalker started buying their property learned a harsh lesson about cheating people who a dragon is planning to treat fairly. He ended up getting a lot of free property from those guys after he ate them.
- Ma'Fan

- How does he get away with eating all these people? It's murder!
- Hard Rock

With the opposition arrayed against him and the inherent instability of new regimes, there is a big question on everyone's mind as to how long this place will last in its current incarnation. Dragons are powerful beings, but megacorporations aren't exactly chopped liver. If they lose money or, god forbid, power from this move, they are going to come after the dragon, and ghost help him if they work together. I'm sure Lofwyr and Saeder-Krupp will be on the nay side of a vote to take Ghostwalker down in a permanent fashion, but Aztechnology has already proven they'll drop a dragon, and others are not pleased at the mess caused by Celedyr in Boston. It's a good bet that if the Corporate Court gets dragged into an issue here, it won't play out well for Ghostwalker. Though I'm sure that is on his radar—dragons, after all, excel at planning.

For the orks and trolls who are working hard to set up a place where they are the majority and they can set positive policies, their efforts may be futile. If the dragon loses power, the power-hungry are going to come in like vultures and tear the carcass of the city to pieces. The orks and trolls who move here may become the inheritors of a kingdom of ash or get shoved right back down when other metas flood back in.

On the positive side here in Denver, the trogs that have already come to town are finding one group to be very welcoming: the Zone Defense Force. The ZDF is bulking up its numbers, and in the process, many of those bulked-up numbers are bulked-up metas. Orks are getting positions in the ZDF at an astounding rate. One could look at it as a strategic move to build up the force or as simply a utilization of the available workforce. Either way, it's a place to work if you're an ork headed into Denver for a new life.

- There are two groups not happy about all the orks joining the ZDF. First, is all the rest of the ZDF, who feel that it's becoming the Ork Defense Force and feel pushed aside because they aren't as big and tough. A lot of ZDF regular Joes are tapping into aspects of their contracts that offer cyber and bio upgrades paid for with years of contracted service (with a reduction in pay, of course). Others are intentionally sending the ork grunts into dangerous situations without proper support. Some come out, but even orks aren't supernaturally tough.
- Rigger X

- I've seen some funny images from the ZDF, like orks in their new body armor. They don't have enough ork-sized gear and haven't had the time, resources, or manpower to modify the gear, so they wear them as is. It leaves some odd gaps, but the humor comes from either the "ork in a crop top" look, or the "fat man in a little suit" style.
- Stone

- I'm sure they don't respond well to the laughter. I know I don't.
- Bull

Some would have expected trolls to be part of that bulk up, but Ghostwalker seems to have different plans for them. The vast majority of trolls who stuck around or have arrived since Ghostwalker took over have all been offered work with what most thought was a pet project of the dragon. The trolls, well-known for being a literate race, are being brought on by Ghostwalker to act as wandering sages. Instead of bashing heads, they're filling heads with the value of words and strength that can be found in genuine literacy. It's like a renaissance of reading led by the most unlikely of sources. It hasn't yet but will certainly go a long way in changing the local view of trolls as big and dumb. I'm not sure if this is part of Ghostwalker's plan, but it is definitely working in favor of those who've been spreading the word to head to Denver.

- Who's doing that, by the way?
- Slamm-0!

- Funny thing is—I don't know. Not really funny. Kind of disturbing actually. I usually have a good connection with ork movements. This one's not coming through the normal channels.
- Bull

The troll sages and ork ZDF enhancements aren't growing unopposed in the city. As one

would expect, the anarchist element that rallied behind Harlequin against Ghostwalker didn't leave. The wild elf hasn't been seen much since Ghostwalker took over but the diamond-eyed forces loyal to him have been sewing the seeds of chaos all over town. They've been particularly keen on hitting the new orks in the ZDF and the trolls that are just trying to spread wisdom in the zone. Their efforts aren't always very precise, and plenty of other orks and trolls get caught in the crossfire. Be wary.

- Why's our favorite chortling chucklehead not pushing harder while Ghostwalker is trying to stem the chaos?
- Slamm-0!

- Because he already got quite a victory out of this, and he's silently gloating.
- Frosty

- Any chance Ghostwalker is intentionally trying to build his force of orks and trolls in order to combat the collection of elves and humans that Harlequin seems to attract?
- Sounder

- While this isn't some fantasy trid with an ancient animosity between elves and orks, the races have never really gotten along because of their innately opposite variations from the norm. Elves are pretty and agile; orks are ugly and tough. It's possible the two masterminds are playing on that internal animosity and turning it external.
- Snopes

MUMBAI

Mumbai provides some interesting opportunities to explore Sixth World ethics. Yeah, some of your eyes will glaze over at that word, but look, that's what a lot of this whole post deals with, so suck it up and let's talk about how you should behave around people.

There are some definite pluses to being a trog in the Indian Union, especially the Hindu-dominated areas. Hindus have long been accustomed to ideas about the connections between all souls and how the souls of beings you care about may appear in unusual shapes, so when goblinization occurs, they generally just saw it as another set of vessels that can hold souls and they went on with their lives. This is not to say it is some racism-free paradise—such a place does not exist—but racism is often isolated, rather than the everyday occurrence it is in other parts of the world.

And yet. Mumbai is dominated by two business sectors: entertainment and organized crime. Both of those sectors offer plenty of job opportunities for trogs—and both of them are all too willing to throw trogs into stereotypical roles.

Now, I know well enough that some of you react to this with a great big "So?" The job pays money. The money spends. So what if both mob bosses and studio producers, when they're hiring, can't envision anything for orks or trolls to do besides hit something? So what if a) They want every ork or troll to talk "street," and b) Their version of "street" sounds nothing like what you have heard on actual streets? They're not discriminating against orks or trolls for these roles—in fact, they're deliberately seeking them out for the jobs! Is it really worth worrying about?

As I said, this is about ethics. How harmful are stereotypes, and how much damage do you do proliferating them?

- I'll tell you this—if those were the most worrisome questions on my mind each night when I went to bed, I'd sleep a whole lot easier than I do.
- Hard Exit

On the whole, you can live a good life in Mumbai. Yeah, the gangland fights can get a little bruising, but who signs up with the mob without expecting a little danger? Sometimes the rain is acidic, sometimes the air is toxic, but that hits everyone, not just trogs, so at least you're on equal footing. So maybe you take the money and don't worry about the rest.

But when you travel the world and see people telling every troll they see to punch through a wall like the bodyguard in that one *Water Margin* episode, be sure to tell yourself that your actions affect only yourself.

- What a bunch of moralizing bullshit. What kind of a world do you think you live in? One where individuals can shape or reverse huge social trends? One where we have the luxury to think about whether we reinforce stereotypes, rather than worrying how to avoid starving/freezing/baking to death? That's not the world we have. We've gotta survive, and if you somehow find a job that doesn't entirely suck, latch on to it and count your blessings.
- Haze

- Self-fulfilling prophecies will be our doom.
- Arete

Again, while Mumbai might be relatively low on the prejudice scale, it's not some sort of paradise. It's got crime, it's got poverty, it's got all the things you expect a major sprawl to have. Doing what we do, we're often going to find ourselves among the poor and downtrodden, and a large number of them are in the slum of **Dharavi**. It has living conditions similar to barrens areas, but a density of buildings more in line with something like Kowloon's Walled City or the favelas of Metropole. One distinguishing facet of this area is that it is very entrepreneurial. Recycling has long been a part of people's lives here, in small operations with little knowledge or interest in health standards, and all manner of spam originates from people typing and calling away as they line long, narrow tables. You can find some people cobbling together makeshift tech here, as well as people willing to put their bodies on the line to make some cash. In short, it's a good place to hide out and recruit help. And like most of the rest of the city, you won't feel out of place here if you're a trog.

BOSTON'S WALL

POSTED BY: THE GREEN MONSTER

Bull told me that JackPoint was going to put up a little "What's Up with Trogs?" piece, and I thought it would be a great chance to talk about something that I find odd, but a lot of my fellow officers don't. Posting any of this on the PubGrid would get me tossed, or worse, but getting it out into a shadow VPN might do some good, and it'll make me feel a little better that I at least tried to tell someone.

To clear up a point above, I'm Sgt. Gregor Harburg, a peace officer employed by Minutemen Security assigned to the NEMAQZ (Northeast Metroplex Area Quarantine Zone), a.k.a. the Boston QZ. I'm a NeoNET citizen until they finalize the corp's death and I find out where Minutemen is getting sold off to, and I've been working on The Wall, as we call it, since day one. I know Bull from a run-in we had back in the '50s when I was struggling to make it as a gaijin oni at Fuchi in Boston. A moral dilemma later, and I discovered the world worked better in shades of grey. Bull has been reaching out to me and directing trusted associates my way ever since.

We've chatted socially more for the past few years because I've been adamant about not helping anyone get into the Boston QZ, and no one in their right mind is helping anyone get out. Sad to say, but we on the wall have known it was more than encephalitis since about three months in, but who in the hell was going to believe us about a nanite-viral infection that overwrites your brain? Now, thanks to the Monads, some of the truth is trickling out, but back then we were still cheerfully enjoying our newer, safer, content-controlled Matrix. They weren't going to tell us about a technovirus. Especially those of us at Minuteman, what with NeoNET's role at the center of the trouble.

With our increasingly social relationship, Bull has heard all of this before, hence his acceptance of my tell-all exposé. Thanks for learning where I'm coming from; now to talk about where we seem to be going.

As all of you well know, the Boston lockdown is still in effect. The Corp Court is still assigning parties to run the show, but PR is pretty much down to one guy saying, "We're assessing options and looking for the best way to properly accommodate and compensate those effected by NeoNET's irresponsible actions," with emphasis on the NeoNET. National coordination is no longer even part of the show, as the UCAS is going to be one of the biggest winners from NeoNET's turn on the sacrificial altar; and the only group they really still have around is NEMALC, the Logistics division, and their main focus is security and keeping everything contained.

- Though this guy doesn't play a hand in it, plenty of others help people get in. It's mostly overlooked, though, because the focus is on keeping things in, not out.
- Winterhawk

Enough background. NEMALC is supposed to be using a coalition of forces from several security corps. Most heavily represented these days is Minuteman, as NeoNET's trashed reputation is costing them contracts around the world so they have the spare personnel, but Lone Star, Knight Errant (and Ares' other, less professional, outfits), Petrovski, Najimi, Centurion, and Desert Storm all provide boots on the ground as well. The thing is, all the boots that have been supplied of late have been larger than average. I don't believe in coincidence, so for some reason, good or ill, the powers above are bulking up the forces at the

wall with huge numbers of orks and trolls, while those getting shipped off wall duty tend to be round-eared. I'm not sure if it's part of a plan to put a lot of muscle on the walls and in the blockade because they're afraid of a potential breakout attempt, if I'm just seeing these things because I'm a troll, or if it's something darker, but I've got some speculation.

The idea of more muscle on the wall would sound like it makes sense to someone who is unfamiliar with the work here. We rarely go hand-to-hand with anything that comes past the wall. In fact, we're under strict orders to make no physical contact with anything we even suspect came from inside the QZ. We're long guns during and hazmat suits after, for every event. Anyone who makes contact without the suit is immediately quarantined. For a while that meant a one-way trip, often back over the wall, but more and more slots are being cleared for work after contact incidents. Adding more punching power doesn't fit well with previous operational standards, meaning we are about to get a change in orders or, again, there's something else going on.

Now, I totally understand that just because I saw a few more trolls around doesn't mean there's a broader pattern. I worried about this early on—I thought maybe I was just seeing something that wasn't there, so I went to the hard data. Pulled up the transfer logs, did some data sorting, and then made myself a nice, simple series of pie charts. Boring, but then again, so is most of my work. The numbers showed a massive shift in metatype distribution in the security force. We went from a pretty standard breakdown (human: 52 percent; ork: 27 percent; dwarf: 11 percent; elf: 6 percent; troll: 3 percent; other: 1 percent) to our current figures (human: 12 percent; ork: 64 percent; dwarf: 3 percent; elf: 1 percent; troll: 19 percent; other: 1 percent) all in the span of six months. I looked at straight number totals as well, and while the overall force total went down by seven percent, that is by no means a way to explain the the drastic shift. It's intentional.

As for the something darker option, I'm all for this one. Not because I want something more exciting in my daily life and a mystery to solve, but because I live in the real world and have, despite my slight increase in rank, been witness to the atrocities this world likes to pile on orks and trolls. I have a few ideas to toss out here. Some may sound crazy, but remember, they're coming from a guy who works as security on the walled-in quarantine zone full of people who have been overwritten by a technovirus transmitted by nanites.

First up, something mundane. I've heard nothing but maybe, just maybe, the powers that be have gotten word from forces on the inside that there is a major breakout attempt imminent. Knowing that the attempt is going to get past the drone security at the wall, they want the biggest (physically, not numbers) force available there to stop escapes. It's a lose-lose for us, as this means they expect the force to make contact. If it's a breakout in force they're going to assume infection, but maybe this way we can limit the losses by filling the gap with the toughest sons of slitches around.

Part two is close to the first but a little less end of the world and a little more silver lining. It's possible the walls are coming down, and once the wall is gone, they want an intimidating force on the other side of the fences giving anyone with an inkling of sneaking out without passing a clearance check second thoughts. Since they haven't even started allowing clearance checks with the walls up—and I'd expect that step to come first—I don't have a lot of hope for this one.

In the darker part of this rabbit hole, I'll offer up the racist conspiracy. Elements of various influential groups that have a distinctly anti-metahuman agenda are influencing the Corporate Court, in particular the ones handling the NEMAQZ, and moving orks and trolls here in order to place them in a hazardous situation. A situation that they would likely be attempting to escalate, either through support for escape attempts or further limitations on the safety protocols and procedures we follow when an incident occurs. These groups could include any of the well-known anti-meta fronts like the Humanis Policlub or Unity Foundation, from a major terror organization like Alamos 20,000, or from one of the whispered secret societies such as the Human Nation. The last option being the one I see with the kind of insider pull to make this happen.

Last but not least is a piece I've been holding back for as long as I could. I don't want to sound nuts, but I think a large number of my fellow officers are already infected. I'm not sure if it happened during an incident or if an external source is the cause, but I've had plenty of my friends show some initial signs and then suddenly start acting strange right before they get transferred, either to another sector of the quarantine or offsite completely. Moving so many orks and trolls

over could be an effort by the Monads to bulk up their forces before the Corporate Court decides what to do with them. It's way out there, I know, but I've seen crazier, and things around here are just getting weird.

Thanks for the outlet, Bull. If you're a trog and you've got family or friends in security, keep an eye on them if they get shipped off to Boston.

- He may be onto something. We know some of them got out. The Red Sox and Tigers both left the city after the initial incident, and others are bound to have gotten out before they locked the place down. Coming back to weaken the defenses, especially now that their efforts are starting to slip, would be a solid tactic. If it hasn't already happened, I'd keep an ear to the ground for jobs against the wall security that don't seem on the up and up.
- Butch

- It's the Monads. The corps aren't taking them seriously, and they are preparing for war. They're going to first convert the guards on the wall and then tear it down from the outside to let loose the crazies from inside the QZ.
- Plan 9

- And on that pleasant note, we wrap.
- Bull

TRUE BLUE TROG

"Holy drek, it's the *real* Suzie Blue!" Aiken gushed at the sight of Ms. Johnson. The view was both disturbing and unprofessional. Disturbing because Aiken was 2.8 meters of muscle and metal who looked more likely to eat a commlink than listen to it despite his position as the team's resident IC-slayer. And unprofessional because Aiken, like Roth, Magpie, and Scratch, was here meeting Suzie Blue for a job—and not one helping her pirate Matrix broadcasts, though every one of them had done that at one point or another in the past few years. Aiken was just more of a fanboy than the rest.

"Stuff it, loverboy. We're here for biz, not autographs," Scratch rumbled through his broken tusks, massive square jaw barely moving. The words were barely intelligible.

"I can manage both," Aiken retorted playfully.

"Let's keep it frosty. We'll get friendly at the payoff when she's happy with a job well done," Roth interjected. He appreciated both of them for their enthusiasm and desire to be professionals, but he knew how to work a Johnson, and acting like a star-struck sim-junky wasn't the way to start.

"Time to fly," Magpie said before stepping away from the foursome and forcing her way onto the crowded dance floor. The others moved along the periphery.

All of them were used to simply pushing their way through a crowd. Two trolls and two orks had little trouble getting through the swathes of metahumanity at almost any club in the Sixth World, but this was not just any club. This was the Rock, hottest trog-club in the CZ. While Magpie—Mags to the team—usually slithered onto the dance floor and then towered over the crowd, today she blended into the mass of orks and trolls grinding and writhing to the latest beats of DJ 3-Meter. It wasn't just the dance floor. The entire club was packed, wall to wall, with the tall towers of the metahuman world.

The Rock had, in what seemed like ancient times, been a massive cistern, holding water for the hotel above. More recently, but still not in this century, it had been turned into a speakeasy. Its current incarnation started as Finn Aisee's Underground House of Rock at the start of the century, a place to go to escape the rising oppression. It held out through the rise of the megas, but fell out of use in '39 after Alamos 20K shattered the Sears Tower. Its recent resurgence was attributable to T-Rex, a local survivor of Bug City who found it while hiding from the bugs.

Roth pushed through at the lead—as the team's frontman he wanted Suzie to see him first. It also let him control the conversation and prevent certain other members of the team from fawning over the local legend. He had just cleared a particularly dense cluster only a few meters from Blue's table when a massive hand planted itself on his shoulder and pulled him back.

Never one to lash out without knowing what was coming, Roth quieted the response of his wired systems and slowly

BY SCOTT SCHLETZ

turned. He took the time to look for any trouble coming from the crowd and checked their faces to see if he might be moving into a fist, but most of those nearby were still bobbing to the beat and talking to those nearby.

The end of his turn brought him face-to-sternum with a Troggy and the Thrashers t-shirt that had seen better days. He looked up to find the troll inside the shirt grimly glaring down at him, body leaning forward and looking over the more diminutive metahuman.

"We don't like your kind here!" the troll yelled over the beat. "You can scram, or I can toss you out." He made a tight fist that was the size of Roth's head and extended thumb to gesture for the door.

To Roth, it was funny. The place was full of his kind. He was an ork. Though his tusks had been resculpted by concerned human parents and his nose had been broken and reshaped so many times it lacked the distinctly porcine appearance of most of his brethren, he still had the height—a solid 2.1 meters of it—and the build, though both his arms were no longer the ones he was born with. The encounter could very well have been a test by Blue, but Roth was going to deal with it the same way he dealt with every threat initially.

"Sorry, big brother. I know I ain't pretty, but I'm still an ork," Roth yelled back. He grinned to show the two broad lower canines that had been trimmed to look more human.

"Nice, poser. Couldn't handle the full tusks. Afraid you might sound funny. Get goin' before I get you goin'!" The troll poked Roth in the chest with a massive finger.

Roth saw Aiken finally turning his attention from Suzie to the events occurring right next to him. Scratch was behind the wall of flesh that was Aiken and stepped over a little to see why they had stopped moving. The moment he saw the troll poke Roth, he slipped around Aiken and flanked the troll.

Roth saw his two running mates slide into position but gave them a calm wave-off that looked to everyone else like he was just scratching his bald head.

"Look, chummer, this can go one of two ways. First, you realize I'm a real ork and let me get to my business. Or,"—Roth paused and looked around at the slowly growing crowd—"you can make a move to toss me out. I'm not going, just so you know, and the results of the attempt are going to wreak havoc on your rep." Roth delivered the options in his best deadpan. He didn't want to taunt the troll, but he also didn't want to make it seem like he was being flippant. This was a serious decision.

"You've got a pair of troll balls on you, smoothie," the troll said, confirming which option he was going with.

"What's your name, my bulky friend?" Roth asked.

"Folks call me Breaker," the troll responded, a wide grin spreading on his face as if he had just delivered the best line ever

"Aiken, make the call," Roth said to his teammate. Aiken knew what he meant.

"Oh, I see. Callin' in your pals for help."

"Oh, no. He's calling T-Rex so I can resume my business after this without interruption. You were going to remove me, I believe." Roth focused on the troll, knowing Aiken would do as asked and Scratch would hold off as long as it stayed a clean fight.

"Cocky little breeder, aren't you!" The troll poked Roth with his massive finger.

Contact had been made—this was no longer a fight he started. Before the troll could retract his hand, Roth grabbed the bulky finger and bent it to an uncomfortable point. The troll's elbow bent, and Roth moved forward, pushing until he had twisted the troll's arm up behind his back. The troll tried to spin, but Roth latched his other hand up under the troll's armpit. He could feel the bulky armored vest beneath the troll's coat as he squeezed and drove his fingers into the nerve cluster in the pit.

The troll howled in pain and anger. Roth kicked out his knee, dropping him to a better height. He squeezed and wrenched in conjunction. The troll's other arm came back, flailing after Roth. It was exactly what he wanted.

Roth pushed forward hard and sent the troll's head rocketing toward the floor. One arm locked behind his back and the other flailed, leaving nothing to blunt the force of the impact.

Roth let go of both points, stepped over the troll, and returned to where he was when the whole thing started.

The troll was slow to rise. Roth stood stock still, staring at the rising behemoth.

"We need to be done, friend," Roth said calmly. "I'm an ork. My name is Roth. I'd like to buy you a drink."

Despite a face thoroughly furrowed in anger, the troll accepted the olive branch. It cost Roth sixty nuyen for a single troll-sized drink, but it was worth it to show Suzie Blue that while capable of solving problems with his fists, he preferred words.

It was an exceptional negotiation point for the job to come.

"Say No to Prop Fo-Fo!" the crowd called in unison. The runners mixed in with the crowd moved their mouths to fit in but focused on the job at hand rather than being caught up in the chanting. It was a powerful scene, personal to every one of them, but they had a job to do and that job was looking more and more difficult by the moment.

"I've got another one," Magpie called over the comm. "Black leather, rather ironic shirt."

Roth scanned the crowd. Black leather was fairly common, but it narrowed the search. He chuckled when he spotted what Magpie was referring to, and Scratch voiced the joke. "Humanis dirtbag wearing a troll gang logo on his chest. Fragging drek for brains." he said, referring to the elf with a spike in his head and X's for eyes that was the symbol of the Spikes.

"That brings our total to eight," Roth said, referring to their count of real threats in the crowd they were facing.

The team was spread across ten meters of the front line of the protest. Gathered around them were hundreds of members of MoM, Mothers of Metahumans. Arrayed opposite them were hundreds of humans, and a few token elves and dwarfs, standing in support of Humanis. The battle lines were drawn. These two opposing forces of nature gathered to shout their vitriol against the latest of the city's hate-fueled legislations that reduced orks and trolls to second-class citizens. Or worse. More and more, the influence of the Japanacorps was sinking into Chicago. The gripevine had already been muttering about a Chicago version of Yomi Island, where the orks and trolls would all be "hired" to work.

All of it was fueling the anti-metahuman fires. And where there was hatred for metahumans, you would find the Humanis Policlub mentioning the lack of human rights, the skewed statistics on metahuman crime rates, and their special form of bigotry-fueled hate speech that snatched the ears and hearts of many red-blooded humans, without them ever realizing the hate they were supporting.

"What's the play, Roth?" Scratch asked.

"Push to the front, put on the charm, get punched and kicked and spit on," Roth said glibly. "If something lethal pops out, bring it down quietly. We're hired to keep this place safe and show that we aren't the violence problem. We can't let any footage get out that might be spun the wrong way."

"Tell me again why we're being paid to get the drek beat out of us," Scratch asked.

"Because we can take it. We're pros. We know how to protect ourselves, and we know the bigger picture," Roth said with bravado.

"In position," Magpie piped in. Roth could see her further down the line, her massive black-feather cloak made her look like a creature from myth and legend. She was there to draw attention. The three Humanis plants moving towards her demonstrated the plan was working.

"Remember, if it looks like violence is coming, get in the way," Roth reminded.

"Yeah, yeah, yeah, we get it Roth," Aiken said over the comms, and the continued out loud, "We're not the monsters of your legends. We're another face of the same die of metahumanity."

"Frag you, trog, you're gonna die alright," a voice called from the crowd. It was followed by calls of "monster," "baby eater," "bridge-dweller," and, of course, "trog" in a myriad of voices.

The responses were no less unpleasant. Anger always begets more anger, but it was still just words. They were here for when words turned to action, though not in the way most would expect for a team of ork and troll runners.

"You're just a bunch of animals! All you big fragtards know is violence," a human screamed from the crowd. Others echoed the call.

Roth saw where it started. It was one of the Humanis goons. The policlubber revved up those around him and pushed those

who seemed ready to fight toward the front. Roth was the closest and began to shift his position in the crowd, aligning himself with the approaching wave of violent hate.

"We are not what they think of us," Roth yelled out to those around him. "Their hatred doesn't need to be ours."

"There's always a coward in the crowd," came back across the gap, not the goon this time. The crowd was becoming emboldened.

"Violence is a choice we all have—ork, troll, and human alike. It isn't the answer to our political plight. It fuels the hatred against us." Roth stepped slightly into the gap and turned his back on the opposing crowd to speak to his side. "They hire us for our muscles, and we break our backs for them. They hire us to frighten people as their security and then call us violent. They push us to the outskirts where the dregs of society fight for their scraps and then label us monsters because we survive and thrive in those dark places. We are not the monsters." His speech finished as he felt the impact on his back, the brunt of the hit absorbed by the well-concealed armor he wore. He turned to face his attacker.

Several of the humans at the front were screaming insults. Everything they could think of, they let loose. None of them were new. He'd heard them all, and he didn't even look much like an ork, but they were nice enough to add in all of the poser insults they could manage as well.

Several more rocks flew at him. He braced and took the hits, feigning pain as the rocks bounced off.

From the corner of his eye, Roth could see others on his side bending. He turned partially to his crowd and called out, "Do not sink to their depths! Do not meet rock with rock! I have done nothing but stand and speak truth. If they are hurt or fear these words and must lash out, show them we are not the same. We stand here, not in fear, but in defiance of fear."

Roth was really beginning to enjoy his place at the forefront, being the voice of the masses gathered with him. It was natural for him to gravitate there—it's what he did for the team—but it was different as part of a cause like this. He wasn't just sticking it to some corp or even stealing from one to give to another. He was standing up for his people, he was speaking to change society. It was exhilarating.

Exhilarating enough that the rock that connected solidly with his head did little more than cut his scalp. Though the metal skull and modified cerebral fluid probably helped. He was hired to take the hits, and he was taking them with flair.

Along the line more angry patches erupted. Each was met with a member of the team stepping forward, seeking to be the focus of the attacks. Scratch's patch were quick to attack the violent-looking ork. Scratch hadn't bothered to dress for the crowd; instead, he wore his leather jacket, complete with the sewed-over patches where his Crimson Crush tags had once been. Magpie and Aiken had more trouble getting their crowd to violence. It was easier to consider attacking something that only looked like a bulky human, but getting up the nerve to throw a rock or a fist at a troll, whose fists were easily the size of your head and they towered over you (and everyone else around them) was a little tougher.

Roth couldn't hear what was going on, but he could see it. He expected Scratch's zone to erupt first, but is was Magpie who had to take the first fall. A small group pushed across the gap, two of the Humanis goons among them, and stormed onto her. She cast her cloak out wide, blocking those behind, and called out, "Let them strike me and Matrix-cast it to the world!"

Roth expected the crowd to ignore her and join the melee, but they pushed back, away from the scene, and pulled out their commlinks to record the beating. Magpie went down gently, slowly collapsing under the weight of the four humans piling onto her. It was honestly too slow in his view. It looked voluntary, but then again he knew the spells she had locked into herself. Their blows were doing nothing.

When they came for Roth, he, too, did not fight. He raised hands to defend himself and let blows that he barely felt bring him to his knees so that he could rise again. He built it up for the crowd and called for their support, as witnesses. When he eventually fell to the ground his crowd had also backed off. They were all recording the violence. One of them even had a live feed that Roth was subscribed to. He watched the human above him repeatedly kick and stomp. A few hits truly hurt, but none of it would be permanent or even lasting.

Every blow he took felt worth it. Worth the pain to show the world that trogs weren't monsters.

News Report
Chicago, Southside

On the Southside side of the Core today, a protest turned bloody. A gathering of both supporters and detractors of the latest racially segregatory proposals aimed toward the reconstruction of the city ended in violence, with one side bearing the brunt of the attacks.

As supporters of the Humanis Policlub gathered opposite members of Mothers of Metahumans, the typical chants focused on the proposals in the state legislature became racially charged. Who threw the first slur can be debated, but no one can question which side turned words to violence.

Footage posted to Matrix sites all over the globe showed the heroic stand taken by four individuals. Two orks and two trolls first faced a barrage of verbal abuse and responded only with positive rhetoric, only to have rocks and cans thrown at them before several not yet identified members of the opposition, resorted to fists and feet, brutally beating the four.

Both sides disbanded as Lone Star and local corporate security forces descended into the fray, likely saving the lives of the four brave metahumans.

Matrix drops with access to several pieces of footage are open for anyone who can offer a lead as to the identity of the assailants.

WORKING AS A TROG IN...

"Yes, sir. I'll get those files uploaded to your commlink within the hour," Darren said with genuine respect in his tone.

"Thank you, Darren," Vice responded with a matching respect, despite the several levels of disparity in their corporate ranks.

The exchange was totally normal, but it still pulled the edges of Vice's mouth up in a smile. Despite several years at Evo, he was still astonished at the difference from his young life growing up on the streets of Seattle as an ork. He went over a decade without anyone ever speaking to him with even the slightest semblance of respect. When he finally gained some bulk, their tones changed, but it wasn't respect—it was fear. No one ever talked to him like a real person. Instead, they either talked slowly, thinking he was dumb, talked fast, hoping to get away from him as quickly as possible, or talked low, mumbling denigrating comments they assumed he didn't hear.

That changed the first day he came to Evo, with his youth far behind him. Since that day, he had added new reasons for others to fear or look at him askew. His Talent had led him to Wise Warrior, which helped his temper, but mistakes cost him his hair color. His mentor had led him to the shadows, where a language barrier between his mentor's native German and his own Seattle streets education combined with his brash attitude and lack of hair hue earned him his street name and distinctive style—Vice, or Weiß in German, clad in white from head to toe. Halley's Comet brought scales to his skin, slits to his eyes, and venom to his tusks. There was nothing normal about him.

But Darren didn't see that. Darren just saw another being at Evo. Another person worthy of being whatever they wanted or what the world had made them. A person worthy of respect, not because he could overpower, ensorcel, poison, or fire him. Not a respect built from fear. But a respect for a person who had lived a different life, taken a different path, but still come to Evo, just like him, in hopes of making a better world.

Vice, ork at birth, freak through life, still hadn't accepted the reality of life in Evo.

A good life for orks, and for anyone else. A good life inside a megacorporation.

He wasn't a fool; he knew they had their dark side. But here, that dark side didn't include treating people, in particular orks or freaks like Vice, as anything less. Here, everyone was treated in the exact way their actions earned.

POSTED BY: ORKPERSONALASSISTANT

Most of the world works at a corp, and an awful lot of them work at a megacorp. That's the rule; runners are the exception. When you spend so much time with other runners, fixers, and Mr. Johnson, it's sometimes too easy to get your perspective warped and forget just how many people out there march to corporate beats. These beats shape our world; even if a lot of us only freelance for corps and never become full employees, we'll engage with their culture when they hire us. And some of us might end up on the inside—maybe working for a corp department of unspecified services, maybe posing as a corp employee to gather critical intel, or maybe working some other angle. The point is simple: In some way, shape, or form, if you're a trog, the way corps view trogs will affect you someday.

Now, it's weird to think of a corporation with millions of employees and hundreds of subsidiaries having a clear-cut culture, and that's a fair point. Sometimes a subsidiary will feel completely different from its parent—for example, while Renraku has the reputation as one of the least meta-friendly corps around, the Australian Institute of Magical Research is about as good of a place for metas as there is, with troll leadership helping make sure trolls are welcomed and treated well. So some of these descriptions should be taken with a grain of salt—they focus more on top-level, central corp cultures rather than how it feels throughout all the many layers of corporate giants.

That said, culture has a way of trickling down. Think of it this way: In Seattle, the Underground is very trog-friendly. You can spend long stretches of time down there not being made conscious of your tusks or horns and just functioning as a normal human being.

But then you hear something about our beloved former governor, and his work to undermine the Underground, or to remove protections, and you know that even though the culture at your level is welcoming, there are forces above it that are not, and those forces could push their way into your little haven at some point in time.

Corporate culture can be sneaky about how it makes itself known and advances. So when you know what's going on in a corp's beating heart, you know what kind of stuff is flowing out to the extremities. And sooner or later, that stuff will have an effect.

On top of that, no culture is monolithic. Different people can have very different experiences inside the same corp. Your position in the corporate food chain, combined with the overall culture of the corp, usually determines how you get treated on a day-to-day basis in the land of corporate wage-slavery. The variations from that norm usually occur for one of three reasons: your attitude (positive or negative, people treat you differently), your connections (oh, sorry Mr. Vogel, I didn't know Arthur was your uncle), or your metatype (smile, it's an elf; get to work, it's a dwarf; ugh, look at the lazy ork; oh frag, it's a troll). So for this post, I've hit up some insiders to take a look at other ways reactions to metatypes shape workplaces at the request of 0rkCE0. I'm going to open up each with a little street-level stereotyping before our insiders enlighten us.

Thanks for the chance to contribute to the shadows. I don't have the heart for it, but I know something's gotta change and you're just about the only force working in that direction.

- Unless you run into a member of the Ancients or something. Just ruins your whole day.
- 2XL
- If we're the world's only hope for change, the world is well and truly fragged.
- Haze

JAPANACORPS

This is a quick and easy killing of three birds with one stone, because the view from street-level is about the same for Mitsuhama, Renraku, and Shiawase. Based on the overall view that everyone seems to have of Japanese culture and its disdain for metahumans—orks and trolls most of all—it's not good. It's a stereotype, but that doesn't mean it can't be applied to the majority of corporate citizens from the three Japanese megas. Honestly, it can be applied broadly to every Japanese corporation, because the only one that had a different opinion is now based out of Russia under a non-Japanese name.

Back in the day, if you were an ork or troll, or any variant thereof, you were viewed as less than human. In the most extreme cases, you were not even looked at as a person, but as a creature. Most of the time this view came laced with pity, other times it came with fear, and all too often it came with anger. The last tended to be most common when an ork or a troll dared to speak to someone above their station (that's everyone), and open hostility was always a possibility if they failed to or incorrectly used the -sama ending.

That's changed to a significant degree. The traditionalists have lost some of the power they used to hold in the empire, and younger leaders are far more tolerant of metas. Part of Mitsuhama's drive to the top spot as number one megacorp in the world involved them developing a more open culture, welcoming talent no matter what form it came in. Some of that is for show, of course—technomancers still tread carefully when they are anywhere near MCT holdings—but there were still definite changes in the culture.

But millions of people don't completely change overnight, or even over the course of a decade. Some people have not changed at all—they've just covered their anger and hatred with quiet, seething resentment. The fact that you never know who these people are or when they'll go off is a source of tension for plenty of trogs.

Then there are the people who have made progress and are quite proud of their progress, but still haven't quite gotten to seeing orks and trolls as fully human. They're the ones who are quickest to tell you about their ork and troll friends, because they've developed that conversational tactic as a defense mechanism to shield themselves from accusations of prejudice that, for some reason, people keep bringing up. They are quick—sometimes overly quick—to praise orks and trolls, but for some reason their praise almost always focuses on physical aspects. Though they'll sometimes mention how articulate an ork or troll they met was, with a note of surprise in their voice, or they'll talk about how they went to a hot new trog-owned restaurant in Harajuku, and they were pleasantly surprised at how well-mannered everyone was, and how they weren't always breaking out into food- and fist-fights.

But they're trying. And sometimes, they're improving. For trogs who have suffered discrimination for decades, that might not be enough, but that's what they've got.

That said, let's dive into the individual corps a little.

MITSUHAMA COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES

POSTED BY: DARRYL DEVLIN

The best word to describe my life inside MCT is "used." As for the rest of my troll kin and our ork brothers, it's not much different. I'm big, I'm strong, I know how to show respect and control my temper. I didn't get immediately shoved into janitorial work to be pushed down and constantly threatened with being replaced by a drone. Instead, they gave me a uniform, then taught me to take a hit. After that, they taught me to give as good as I got. My weapons training stayed basic because I was never expected to pull my gun. I was there to be intimidating and if necessary, to bring down rowdy metas. Yup, just metas. I was told to never lay my hands on a human citizen of MCT. Didn't matter if I knew the SIN they cast was fake as a troll CEO, I wasn't allowed to engage. That was left to the human officers.

That was when I was first hired. The guidelines didn't change all at once, but they still changed, partially because they just didn't make sense. When you have a strong security guard excelling at all aspects of their job, why limit what they can do? Humans commit crime and do shadowruns—why put high-quality people on the sidelines when that happens? So the scope of our duties broadened, and we were trusted more. Sometimes one of us was promoted to man-

agement—generally in security, seldom in any other division, but it was still progress.

But it's tough to get away from the fact that trogs are seen a certain way. All across the company, we're optimized for our size and resilience. We're pushed to develop the big muscles, and depending on how well we test in other areas, we get placed in jobs to best make use of our strength combined with our other talents. If we don't develop, or we score particularly low across the board, we can expect to find ourselves doing the lowliest of low jobs, often in extremely unsafe environments. Or more often, we are simply expelled from the corporation and into the local national population or transferred to a subsidiary and sold to other corporations as part of that corp's assets.

For trolls with the Talent or high scores in technical areas, MCT finds a special place in their security division for them. They struggle to be treated the same as their fellow mages and hackers, and they often find positions on heavy-combat or high-threat teams thanks to their strength and ability to shrug off small-arms fire. These same teams often find orks in their ranks. When they can, MCT forms complete squads of orks and trolls. Unlike the old days, these squads now usually have a trog commander.

But the drive for money is strong in MCT, even more so than the rest of the Sixth World. If an ork or troll can make a division more money by ascending to a particular position, then corporate policy is that an ork or troll should definitely ascend to that position. There may be exasperated looks and remarks muttered under various people's breath, but more and more, those attitudes will not stand in the way of our advancement.

There are plenty of remnants of less tolerant days. Back when I first started, the corp wouldn't do a thing to cater to our size, and they're not rebuilding every facility or buying a whole new fleet of vehicles just because attitudes have shifted. Lots of times we have to cram ourselves into vehicles not built for us, or squeeze our hands around weapons that feel like toys. If you want to fit in, if you want to advance, you don't complain. You find a way to make it work. Adjusting your own property is fine, but it has to be returned to its human-appropriate sizing when you cease residence or return it to the corporation. This often means a serious debt when moving, transferring, or being fired, often transferred over to your new employer if you get shuffled off with a subsidiary.

- I actually watched a troll get left behind by a sec team. They came on site with two vehicles, a modded Citymaster and an armored-up spirit. The Citymaster got rocket-hollowed and when they had to bail the troll didn't fit. They booked it and the troll got stranded.
- Balladeer

- How'd that pan out for him?
- Picador

- Her. She's now regular muscle for a team I work with in Dallas.
- Balladeer

What you can generally expect from MCT is that they will try to put their best face forward. Yeah, it can be awkward sometimes, as they sometimes will go out of their way to tell you how much they like some famous trog or another, or how they once voted for a trog for public office, but you can always grit your teeth and tell yourself that hey, they're trying. And if they fake it long enough, perhaps someday they'll make it.

RENRAKU

POSTED BY: BIGREDONE

I have had the honor and privilege of serving the citizens of Renraku for more than twenty years. I worked as a warehouse packager as a child, proved trustworthy through several morality tests, and was allowed to train for a spot at Najimi Security through my high school years. Najimi offered me the opportunity to overcome my limitations as an ork, show the strength of my honor, and join the ranks of its elite samurai. It has not been easy as one of the lesser breed among my betters, but with my strength and perseverance I have done well.

And no, I am not a fool.

I fully understand the difficulties that my kind have here at Renraku. It is a place of great expectations, culture, and history. A history that we have not yet earned a place in, other than as the monsters of legend. Our ancestors wronged the ancestors of the people of Renraku, and we must work to atone for that. I have risen to a place that few can achieve. The ranks of Najimi's corporate samurai are limited, and few orks can aspire to this position. But in truth, very few among our kind would be able to. The strength of discipline I learned in my youth came mostly because I

was not raised among my own kind. I was raised among humans. While I felt shame when they looked upon me, I earned their respect. Not with fist and foot, but with honor and restraint of my violent soul. That is the path denied those of my kind who are raised in ignorance and anger.

- Internalized oppression and self-loathing are real.
- Sunshine

The orks—and I'll include the trolls as well, for they are also in need of atonement—are welcomed into the Renraku family. They are given all the tools needed to act in the proper fashion, honor the proper customs, and obey the appropriate laws, both criminal and social. They are confronted with a choice: Will they breed anger at their indebtedness, or will they accept and overcome it. In life, we do not get to choose when a debt is owed; we wrong another, and they choose how the debt must be repaid. Life within Renraku is a chance to repay that debt. A chance to live a life of honor for ourselves, our children, and our families. I shall have an honorable family name to pass on.

What others must understand is that our place in the corporation is not given to us as a right. It is earned. We do not have honor from our family name. We must earn every centimeter of a bow. We start from a place of shame, but we are not forced to stay there. We keep ourselves there by fighting against the honorable among us. Yes, they shame us and in doing so, shame themselves, but they can afford the small shame. When we strike out in anger or act against them with a desire for vengeance, we have no honor to spare.

We can grow in Renraku. We can earn honor. We can aspire to give our future generations a place without shame.

Or we can rebel. We can dishonor ourselves by acting out. We can huddle in anger and resentment at the bottom of the social caste because we are too prideful and angry to understand that this place only shuns those who shun it. We can fail to realize that we work to lift ourselves up but have nothing to fall back on, so there is not room for failure.

- Somebody drank the Kool-Aid!
- Slamm-0!

- But there is perhaps no better way to illustrate the Renraku mindset.The calm and conviction BigRedOne displays can be tremendously influential, and he also shows just what

you have to go through to succeed at Renraku. You have to accept your own inferiority to be seen as good—it's a kind of deeply internalized guilt I hear Catholic friends talk about. But rather than waiting for an unseen redemption, your parent corp is there waiting to help you purge your guilt. In Japanese society, with all the importance placed in being part of a larger whole, the fact that orks and trolls are offered any way in is a strong draw.

- Mihoshi Oni

- That's for the ones who stay. What BigRedOne has no real way to understand are those who he condemns, those who, in his terms, "huddle in anger and resentment at the bottom of the social caste." He dismisses them, puts them out of mind, because that's part of the whole point of the social conditioning he is subjected to. Mihoshi Oni's Catholic analogy is perhaps more accurate than she understands (which is odd for a decidedly non-Catholic nation). Trogs are born with the original sin of their metatype. They are not fully human from birth; that humanity must be earned. If they do not earn it, then what is the loss? They were never fully human to begin with, so no human has been lost in the rejection of this trog.

  Imagine, then, the resentment of the trogs who have been treated this way. Who have had to audition for the chance to be real people and did not pass. When you are rejected goods from Renraku—one of the most influential forces in the nation—where do you go? What can you be? Unsurprisingly, a lot of these people fall into the shadows, but be careful if you're thinking about them as a great pool of potential recruits. They are often full of anger and feel as if they have nothing to lose, and that's a dangerous combination.
- Jimmy No

- The best thing about all this Catholic imagery is that Renraku has truly been subjected to the wrath of an angry god.
- Netcat

I was asked to provide thoughts about shadowrunners in relation to Renraku, but I am hesitant to do so. My primary advice is that you simply should not do it, since you have little to gain and tremendous amounts to lose. The gains are trivial—a handful of nuyen—and the losses of honor and dignity are far more important. When you operate without structure and without discipline, you surrender yourself to what is weak inside you. Do not give in. Build strength instead of indulging weakness.

- Good hell, he talks like a self-help book.
- Cayman

- Actually, he talks like a Renraku employee manual. That last line is a direct quote.
- Mihoshi Oni

But I am not totally without pity. I understand that, in the process of building our eventual selves, we must often begin from low points. People may be in the shadows as a start to something better. So conduct yourself with honor. Negotiate honestly and keep the promises you make. If any Renraku personnel make reference to that which you are not, understand that they are simply pointing you to what you could be. Accept their words and actions with dignity.

I know that orks and trolls who run against Renraku might worry that they will be special targets for Renraku security forces. That's foolishness. Our job is to defend what we have and to secure our premises. Everything else is subordinate to that.

- Yeah, he's probably not being purposefully disingenuous—he very possibly really doesn't know that Renraku threat analysis procedures, more often than not, identify trolls and orks as the first targets to eliminate. Probably just a coincidence.
- 2XL

Other than that, the same criteria that apply to employees of Renraku apply to those on the outside. Simply put, that means you will be treated as you demonstrate you deserve.

- Which is a concept that always sounds better to those deciding who deserves what.
- Jimmy No

SHIAWASE

POSTED BY: HIDEKO MACHIKI

I don't like to speak for my people as a whole, but I will. I think everyone should get a chance to speak for themselves, because we all come from different places with different experiences. I know why I got picked. I've been around. I've been to a lot of places within Shiawase, so I've seen how the company treats orks and trolls in spots all over the world. As much as I'd love to say some places are better than others, it's just

not the case. Shiawase is pretty universal in their treatment of orks and trolls.

It's not deplorable, but it isn't good by a long shot. As a whole, they are slightly more polite than Renraku, not trying quite as hard as Mitsuhama. They treat their orks and trolls with a sort of universal pity. It's not negative, it's not often overt, it just is. They aren't condescending to them for the most part, but they also don't give them much slack when it comes to being respectful. Disrespect will get a troll or ork quickly demoted to the lowest position in their current assignment. If there is no lower, they are docked pay, privileges, and often even access to basic necessities. There is definitely a price to pay for disrespect, but for the most part, the orks and trolls of Shiawase are tame.

Shiawase citizens interacting with orks and trolls from outside the corp are often shocked at how brazen and outspoken they can be. They also often mistake their place as a megacorporate citizen to mean they have authority over people outside their corporate territory, and they often suffer grave consequences for this action. But so too do the trolls and orks who cause them harm. Shiawase has no tolerance for violence against their employees by anyone, and old habits make them lean on orks and trolls harder than others. If their own corporate security doesn't handle the problem, they are not above contracting out their discipline to shadowrunners in order to keep their citizens safe. The cost is often placed onto the debt of the injured citizen, creating even greater animosity against metahumans. But the scales must be balanced somehow, and bringing shame to Shiawase by shaming an outsider deserves punishment.

As you can guess, there is not a lot of room for advancement up the corporate ranks. Minor management positions are about the best any ork or troll can ever hope for within Shiawase, and they had better not make any mistakes once they get there. The powers above and around them are likely at the full length of their tolerance in having to deal with an ork or troll with any power. And those below them are looking for every opportunity possible to knock them down. The best and smartest orks and trolls work hard to get their offices and production lines filled with other orks and trolls. As that sometimes creates a "sell-out" mentality, moving up in Shiawase is kind of a "damned if you do, damned if you don't" scenario.

The one thing I can give Shiawase some credit for in the understanding department is their Shiawase Social Circles. These small-group clubs are intended to allow citizens of Shiawase to get together and talk about life in the company, as well as their personal lives, with others of similar social standing. It's supposed to prevent cross-status griping and give citizens an outlet. For a lot of orks and trolls, it gives them a chance to actually talk and socialize with others of their kind in a place where they aren't forced to hold a certain face, or remain silent because of their societal status. The structure of this group means that suggestions for ways to improve corporate practices are regularly passed on to management. They might not have a strong track record of doing anything with most of these recommendations, but some movement on even one or two recommendations is better than things were in the old days. Or at Renraku.

- It's nice that this gentleman sees this as a good thing, just like a good corporate drone, but these meetings are all monitored by the MFID, Shiawase's intel operation. Suggestions may go to management, but hints of insubordination and discontent get there faster.
- Thorn

- Hideko doesn't have a lot of information about trog runners dealing with Shiawase, so let me fill you in. Shiawase is more conscious than their peers about keeping their shadowy activity quite dark. With their direct connections to the Imperial family, they want to avoid clear engagement in criminal activity. This goes beyond the basics of having a Department of Unspecified Services and using the name Mr. Tanaka when hiring runners. Within Japan, they outsource their runs, using a rotating series of fixers. They're so dedicated to not having any fixers being clearly identified as in their pocket that they will sometimes arrange runs against their own holdings just to throw people off their scent.

  The end result is that when you're hired by Shiawase, little of their corporate culture will trickle down to the fixer and Mr. Tanaka, because that's how the corp wants it. So you might get an out-and-out racist, or you might get someone who takes you for who you are rather than make snap judgments based on your metatype. All this is to say: Don't count on predictability.
- Mihoshi Oni

EVO

POSTED BY: DEVOTED

Let's just cross over to Evo, as they were once a Japanacorp but have truly evolved with this

modern world. This is exactly what the streets see when they see Evo and they think about orks and trolls. The citizens of most corps think Evo is like the ultimate "love everyone for being themselves" megacorp. Acceptance is everything, an attitude that flows all the way up to ork corporate president Yuri Shibanokuji. Trogs, nagas, centaurs, pixies, shifters, and every other variation on intelligent life are supposedly equal in the eyes of Evo. It's a pleasant fantasy, because no megacorporation is really that open. At least not one full of independently thinking creatures, because people are people and people get jealous and scared and confused by things that aren't like them. That's the world's view of Evo. Either people see them as the "we accept everyone" mega, or they think it's all a load of drek—that the corp is just putting on a face for all.

Evo is the place to be if you are a troll or an ork of any nationality or metavariation. Our corp doesn't care where you came from—it cares about where you're going and how we can help you get there. I know this sounds like a load of megacorp PR trash, but it isn't. At least, not exactly. There are certain addendums and requirements for Evo to look at you as more than just your skin and bone deposits. Big part is, you've got to leave the streets, and the garbage that society has dumped on you, at the door. They give you time to adjust, but if you're still responding to every correction with attitude, or getting physical (or threatening to) any time someone hurts your feelings, they'll show you the door. It's not easy, but it's an opportunity, and that is something a lot of trogs never get.

- Okay, look, this poster is likely an ork or troll, thinks they're on our side, and is helping us with advice about how to get ahead in the world. But did you see the assumption above? Orks and trolls need to be specially told how to act in the workplace, because we're temperamental and violent. Some of this stuff is really deeply ingrained.
- 2XL

- Right, it's racism. It's not that you just get sensitive when you're given advice.
- Clockwork

- You hear the same piece of advice in your life a hundred times when you've done nothing to show you need it, and we'll see what you think.
- 2XL

Once you're in, Evo wants trogs for more than muscle. But if you *want* to be muscle, you can get augmented to be the most muscular thing you have ever seen. Evo's transhumanist principles may have been curbed slightly by the issues presented by CFD, but now that the corp has accepted more than its fair share of Monads, the agenda is back and blazing ahead full steam. That agenda can really be titled *transmetahumanist*, or even *transmetasapientist* because they don't care to stop with making the ultimate human. They want to make the best and purest version of every being.

With that idea, trogs prosper in every aspect of Evo. From the front line to the boardroom, from the deepest mines to deep space, trogs can do any and everything within this megacorp. Working your way up the ladder, or shifting over to your dream job, is just a matter of working hard and putting your desires out there. Sure, it's competitive, and there are probably others who have skills and desires to match yours, but at Evo, at least being a trog won't automatically prevent you from moving up or moving over.

I'm also quite happy with the accommodations that Evo puts in place for every citizen. I'm not sure "accommodations" is really the best word, though. Evo is one of the only companies that builds places specifically to facilitate a citizen's stature, be it bigger for a troll or smaller for a pixie. They alter buildings to make it possible for naga to navigate without hands. They create educational systems and laws to reflect the faster ork maturation rates. They don't raise the price of everything just because they had to make it for a smaller portion of the population. They adjust their environment to fit the needs to the individuals, and they don't ask the individual to live like the person next to them even though they are nothing alike.

- There's some segregation within Evo. Their acceptance of Monads has become well-known throughout the corp, but not everyone is open to them. They have no problem with an ork being an ork, but a Monad ork isn't an ork. It's a body-snatching AI inside a body that has tusks, and a lot of people have a problem when it comes to that idea. They can accept AIs, but the natural form of an AI isn't meat and bone. There's still quite a bit of fear inside the corp, despite their outward public acceptance.
- Plan 9

- Addendum to the above. It's not just about body-snatching orks, but all body-snatching.
- Plan 10

- Since we brought it up, I'll take this chance to mention the Special Selection Unit 211. It's a Yamatetsu Naval special operations unit rumored to be all Monads. They're supposedly all trogs, taking the toughest ork and troll Monads they can find and getting them to work together. They can supposedly share thoughts too, but that isn't confirmed. It would make them a top-tier spec force if they can, though.
- Picador

If you're a trog running the shadows for Evo, there is one substantial benefit: the gear. Evo knows people want their augmentations, and they know paying people in augmentations can be financially wise for them, so they do. They don't charge more for ork and troll modifications than they do for other metatypes, at least when it comes to runners, so orks and trolls can pick up some relative bargains. And they don't fall into the trap of immediately assuming orks and trolls are bruisers—whether they want a cerebral booster, elastic joints, or a vocal range enhancer, Evo is ready to provide it without assumption or pre-judgment. It's refreshing.

AZTECHNOLOGY

POSTED BY: CARLOS RAMIREZ

Once we slip into the shadows and see the dark truths behind Aztechnology's sacrifice-ritual-based state religion, we immediately focus on that and only that. We pay zero attention to the fact that they are probably the most liked and identifiable megacorp in the world. Nothing in the history of the corp has managed to mar its friendly and wholesome image. Not the fact that it was started by drug kingpins, that it had an Omega order against it, that it uses sacrificial rituals on a regular basis, that its favorite game is bloody as hell, that it did oppressive things in the Yucatán, or that it blasted a dragon with untested chemical weapons. None of that has changed the Stuffer Shack-pleasant image that Aztechnology has built.

That means most people don't even wonder how trogs are treated by the Big A, because it's not on their cultural radar compared with everything else. Assumptions that it's generally neutral, or similar to Aztlan's—which is also fairly neutral, if not leaning toward positive because of the strong attitude of machismo—are common. From my look inside Aztechnology, our worth and value are generally tied more to our value as a citizen than anything else.

The basic fact is this: It's worse to be a Catholic than a trog in Aztlan and Aztechnology.

I've never found a place that I'm not wanted or accepted in Aztechnology. We don't get transferred to less meta-friendly nations, but that's not really a limitation when there is plenty of opportunity in places at home and abroad with people who are less closed-minded. And moving up in the world is what's important in a corp, right? That's what everyone thinks.

Those who don't buy into that, who see corporate life as a fuller life and want more meaning than climbing the corporate ladder, find life inside Aztechnology to be comfortable for orks. Trolls find things not built to fit, but people don't mock this or think poorly of them. They just think they're big. In fact, in most cases, thanks to the general attitude and tradition of machismo in their culture, trolls are rarely challenged. Most people are smart enough to know that in a culture where insults can be met with fists, as long as it doesn't get deadly, it's best to not insult the orks and trolls.

Overall, with the culture of machismo, the physical nature of orks and trolls fits right in. They usually keep beefs between their own kind, more out of respect than because of any racial bias. You don't look tough when you keep beating up the weak—you look weak. The corp doesn't necessarily condone or look down on any of this; they just see it as part of life within Aztechnology.

Aztechnology doesn't display any inherent racial bias against trogs, nor do they favor them. They simply utilize assets for whatever maximizes the bottom line for Aztechnology. Orks and trolls have the chance to move up in the world and get into the boardroom if they want, but most find a happy place somewhere in Aztechnology and Aztlan's vast security and military complex. The nice part about being within that facet of the corp is the lack of limitation on where you are sent. Trog executives are kept away from other corps that display a racial bias, but security and military forces are there to kick ass and take names, and they don't care if they hurt feelings while they do it. It is a place where orks and trolls can flourish, as long as they live within the culture of the company. But that's the same deal every other metatype gets.

Trogs who are suspected of following a different cultural route, specifically Catholicism, are looked on with disdain and distrust. It's kind of a weird idea—if anything, trogs who are part of a religion that initially considered them abominations should be looked at as extra-dedicated.

- Yeah, no. If someone calling you an abomination is not enough to drive you away, I think it's completely fair to question your judgment.
- 2XL

- Sometimes spiritual conviction means putting in the work to help bring your fellow travelers past their prejudices, rather than leaving them to stew in them.
- Goat Foot

It's not a normal issue inside the corp, as everyone is expected to participate in the corporate rituals, but some people hide their affiliations for obvious reasons: It is illegal, and they have no desire to be the next sacrifice.

- The threat of death is not enough to keep a lot of orks from following other religious paths. Partly because it's not like the sacrifices are openly advertised—the vast majority of Aztechnology employees don't know what the Path of the Sun does behind closed doors. For the most part, if you're not high up in the organization and you keep your beliefs close to your vest, you can get away with believing a whole lot of things.
- Picador

One of the tricks about Aztechnology is that its culture is sometimes increasingly variable depending on how far certain subsidiaries are from the home base of Aztlan. Being a fiercely competitive megacorp, Aztechnology subsidiaries often take on a contrarian streak to the culture around them, to differentiate themselves from other corps in the area. In Japan, they are almost aggressively progressive, actively recruiting/headhunting/extracting orks and trolls who may feel overlooked in one of the Japanacorps, promising to do better by them. In Vladivostok, by contrast, their subsidiaries employ the dog-whistles and coded phrases that Human Nation has popularized to not-so-subtly hint that they provide shelter from having to work side-by-side with the "less-civilized" metatypes.

In the shadows, though, the homeland strain of utilitarianism returns to strength. The job needs to get done, so the focus falls on those who can do it. I know Aztechnology has a certain reputation in the shadows, but I believe that's mainly a product of rumors and speculation rather than hard fact. People start to associate a corp with blood magic, and all of the sudden they get all paranoid. I believe that if a fair study were conducted, it would show that Aztechnology Mr. Johnsons are at least as honest as any other megacorp Johnsons, if not more so, and that they tend to pay better as well.

- To recap: "You are all forming conclusions based on confirmation bias. Here, let me refute that with my own confirmation bias."
- Snopes

The utilitarian view of so many Aztechnology operatives means that as long as you are useful to them, they will not double-cross you. Double-crossing an operative means burning them, and you don't do that when you can gain more value by keeping them working for you. So maintain your value, and you'll have nothing to worry about, regardless of your metatype.

- Right. Aztechnology Mr. Johnsons only turn on you when you've shown you can't do the job any more. Or when you've learned something about them they don't want you to know. Or learned something about the corp they don't want you to know. Or when they figured out they could save money by not paying you and maybe kill you. Or when they're pissed because you looked at them funny. Or when it's Wednesday. But that's it.
- Haze

HORIZON

POSTED BY: FALLEN STAR

Gary Cline, Manus West, Derk Barik, Auxion—the list goes on and on of the stars and successful trogs at Horizon. The corp has put enough faces out there that everyone knows being a trog is not going to keep you from success. Horizon promotes a star quality in everyone, both within the corp and out on the street. People see Horizon as a place to get recognized and become famous, no matter what metatype you are. There are certainly advantages for a trog inside a corporation where an ork sits as CEO.

With the right spin everybody can be amazing, and that's how Horizon treats trolls and orks. Yes, most of them work in security or sanitation (older hiring practices weren't always perfect, and some

of the demographics of the corp are reflective of less-than-perfect older practices), but they can't ever say they are limited, not with Gary running the show. We have troll rockers, ork simstars, troll actors, ork rappers, an ork at the helm, trolls in the boardroom, and orks in executive offices all over the world. We are as diverse as they come. Where our citizens choose to stop in their rise and what they choose to settle into doing isn't the Horizon choice; it's theirs. If you're happy working as a sanitation engineer in the Seattle offices, why in the world should Horizon force you to work toward that corner office? Any office could be yours.

How's that for good spin? I'm not a Horizon citizen anymore thanks to inadvertently accessing a file I didn't even read, but I still know how to throw the company's spin out there. The thing is, that's all it is. That view is spin for the world to see. Inside, we're told what to do. We're told what to believe. We're told where we belong. Sure, some people defy what they are told and they push up through the ranks, but for every one of those who succeeds in becoming a shining star, there are a hundred others who burned out, got kicked out, or got permanent early retirement for their efforts against the views of the Consensus. People are people, and since their views are part of shaping the overall views of the corp, the views of the bulk of Horizon citizens—sadly as small-minded as people in many other places in this world—tend to skew the images of trogs. This pushes them right back into the places where the ignorant think they belong.

- Horizon's efforts, and positive views of trogs, are beneficial to the overall view, but inside the corp it creates a lot of tension. The bulk of Horizon drones think the metas get too much of the corp's attention. Most of them don't say it out loud, but the Consensus surveys are private.
- Sunshine

The continual problem of Horizon is that the corp is supposed to be kept from unfortunate excesses by the wisdom of crowds, but this can limit them as well, as the corporation has trouble surpassing the limitations of the people it employs.

Here's a fun example, one that illustrates the positives and negatives of having an ork at the top. The positives are pretty clear—it shows that there is no ceiling for trogs, no level they can't advance to. The negatives are more subtle, and I can demonstrate it with one internal report I saw (not the document I got fired for, in case you were wondering). At one point, during some belt-tightening that happened after the trouble with technomancers in Vegas, Cline cut a lot of budgets, which led to reductions in salaries and perks. For months after that, promotion rates of orks and trolls dropped like a rock, while the same group was getting laid off in hugely disproportionate numbers. What was going on? The Consensus recorded a significant uptick in negative feelings about orks and trolls, and that was reflected in its input into personnel decisions. As is often the case, people saw an ork doing something they didn't like—in this instance, cutting their pay—and decided to take it out on all of the orks in the world. And the trolls, too, for good measure.

Some efforts have been made to change this. Diversity programs have been introduced at subsidiaries across the globe, with the goal of helping people want more diversity so that such a desire would be reflected in the Consensus.

- The problem is, many of these programs are half-assed, designed by people looking to collect some cash instead of doing any real good. And when you get half-assed diversity programs, you tend to build more negative feelings toward diversity. So I wouldn't count on these programs having a significant effect.
- Kay St. Irregular

What this means is the main tip for orks and trolls dealing with Horizon—either as an employee, potential employee, or outside contractor—is to be ready for weird mood shifts. It won't be dramatic, but Horizon is regularly "fine-tuning" how the model works, as well as who should consult it and when. So sometimes the instructions change (like if Cline pissed off the employees again), or the Consensus altered protocols for how it should be consulted and what employees should do in certain circumstances. Don't expect it to make sense, and be aware that Mr. Johnson may not be aware why they're doing what they're doing.

ARES

POSTED BY: SANMAN

Because the corp was built on a foundation of American beliefs, concepts of acceptance are integral to the basics of Ares Macrotechnology.

The American dream has transferred to the Ares dream, and it transcends race. Ares has advertisements all over the place that depict every metatype working for the well-known Americorp and every one of their subsidiaries. From arms to construction, security to logistics, Ares always has its bases covered when it comes to keeping their image balanced.

I snagged a copy of the employment tracking while I was trying to dig up some dirt on Terrance Davis, a low-level HR exec whose wife suspected him of cheating. It turned out to be a wild goose chase, but the data I pulled seemed good for some side cash. I made a comment on a Matrix site about it, and here we are. So let's talk about trolls and orks, and their employment status within Ares Macrotechnology and its subsidiaries.

I don't have universal data. There are plenty of employees under the Ares umbrella who don't make it onto official records, or their position is recorded only as accurately as someone with power desires. That said, Ares employs a lot of orks and trolls. The vast majority of them fall into the lowest five percent on the Ares income charts, and most work in fields where they cover up the drek work they do with fancy titles. They cover this less-than-equal treatment with good PR and lots of positive ork and troll stories spun through their internal media. The citizens of Ares don't seem to have a beef with orks and trolls, even those from outside the company, but the insiders and those who control movement up the ladder skew their promotions toward other metatypes. Sorry, insider view.

Data shows that orks and trolls are most heavily promoted within Ares security divisions and subsidiaries. These are the places where their muscle often gets them enough exposure to earn them a second look from the higher-ups, and it's

an area with enough risk that untimely accidents can easily be arranged for those who don't pay off in the way the bosses expected. Knight Errant gets a lot of them, but the figures showed an even larger percentage getting bumped over to Hard Corps, and Wolverine takes the cake with the highest percentage of ork and troll employees of any Ares subsidiary. We all know the reputation that those sec corps have, and it looks like Ares just likes to put the big, mean trolls and orks out on the goon squad to break heads and scare off shadowrunners.

Outside of security, the next biggest division to employ orks and trolls is construction, where I'm sure their strong minds are being put to use in the architectural design field. Oh, wait, no—the data shows them heavy in the labor force, and percentages dwindle rapidly as we look higher and higher up the corporate food chain.

As an employee, I found this data deplorable. Our overall treatment of this segment of metahumanity is just wrong. We use them for their strength and then shut them out. I hope this data gets out to people who can see what Ares is truly like—to people who will spread the truth and hopefully open the eyes of not only citizens of Ares, but also citizens of all the megacorps around the world.

One division deserves special attention, and that's Knight Errant. Any security corporation has a complicated relationship with orks and trolls, and this one is no different. Security corps love to hire orks and trolls—the extra nuyen you have to spend on uniforms that fit them is more than compensated for by their intimidation value on the streets. A troll working crowd control is worth four or five humans.

- And seven or eight elves. Hi-yo.
- 2XL

The trick is convincing orks and trolls to do law enforcement work. An awful lot of them grew up viewing law enforcement as antagonists, or even their enemy. So making the switch to consider it as a career is not simple. And it's not just from within—family and friends often apply significant pressure to keep orks and trolls out of law enforcement, telling them they'll be traitors to their people.

This means that the orks and trolls who make it to the ranks of law enforcement are often very committed to the job. They've overcome a lot of opposition to the job from within and without, so they're very certain of their path. They can tend to the fanatical, so keep that in mind if you want to convince them to look the other way or take a bribe.

- As is the case with any generalization, there are plenty of exceptions. Some trogs joined the force in a burst of idealism, only to be ground down as they see the unfairness the justice system directs toward orks and trolls. They stay on the job, mostly through inertia, but they may become lazy, corrupt, or willing to undermine certain investigations to promote their vision of fairness. It adds a certain amount of chaos and unpredictability to any encounter with trog cops.
- Sunshine

SAEDER-KRUPP

POSTED BY: KORPKINDER

The utter chill of the street rep everything associated with S-K manages to possess makes any assessment of a single aspect relatively moot. The corp is feared worldwide. They are seen as ruthless and hyper-efficient, without a sense of humanity at all. Looking just at that overall view, one can only infer that Saeder-Krupp looks at orks and trolls the same way it looks at guns, steel, and cars: as tools to better their bottom line by using them in the most efficient and effective way possible.

When you talk Big Ten, up until recently, the biggest of the group was Saeder-Krupp. One of the things that got Lofwyr's corp to the top of the heap was an understanding of how to use resources to their fullest potential. I'm not saying orks and trolls are simply resources, but in the eyes of Lofwyr, everything and everyone in his corporation are resources. That attitude tends to flow down from the top, getting a bit thinner as you reach the corporate laymen, for whom bits of racial hostility remain based on residual resentment left over from the formation of the Black Forest Troll Kingdom (now Black Forest Troll Republic). The chopping off of such a large chunk of Bavaria left a bad taste in the mouths of other Germans. The attitude is stronger the closer to the German foundation of the corp you get, but it travels with the executives and workers around the world.

Most orks and trolls who work their way up into the higher ranks of the corp are from offices and subsidiaries not directly tied to Germany. But once they have proven themselves, they don't catch flak for tusks or horns in the megacorporate headquarters. Lower in the ranks, orks and trolls deal with

more issues from people outside their corp than inside, even though they're far enough down the corporate ladder that they struggle to get noticed by anyone else in the corp.

While not exactly politically correct, and not universal over the entire megacorp, there is a definite dislike or distrust of elves and dwarfs, which provides the orks and trolls of the company another advantage. It's a common view that elves and dragons don't get along, and while this issue is mainly the result of an elite few elves, the rest of the elven population is scrutinized for the possibility that they could be coordinating with that elite group.

The issue with dwarfs is a different one. Lofwyr isn't a huge fan of international networks leading out of his corporation, but he is also not keen on losing access to these same networks. He just needs to control the flow of information. Point is, elves and dwarfs are handicapped here, leaving orks and trolls to push forward and move up the SK ladder.

The social life of orks and trolls within SK is one of the best in the megacorporate world, and I don't just say that because it's my corp. The social societies of SK are unmatched in corp and private circles, especially for trolls. Part of this is in an effort to give trolls who stayed on as SK citizens, rather than moving to a nation of their own, a place to develop connections and feel at home. These societies have stuck around and grown over time. Other groups, including numerous ork-centered social organizations, have followed suit and sprouted up all over the world. Other corps have similar groups, but unlike them, all we care about here is that orks and trolls have a place inside SK that makes them feel like more than just meat and muscle.

- SK has no special love for orks and trolls. They also have no special love for anyone else other than drakes. Though if an ork or a troll were a drake, I guess they might get special treatment. My point is, the orks and trolls inside SK aren't treated special. They're treated like everyone else. The elves, dwarfs, humans, and other sapients inside the mega have social clubs, and opportunities to move up. Lofwyr wants the best, and the only way to push for everyone to be the best is to create competition and interaction.
- Cosmo

Moving away from more general statements, there are some areas of particular interest. The aforementioned Black Forest Troll Republic is one of those. As I mentioned, there is some resentment within some parts of the corp, especially among old-timers, but the growing strength of the Republic has generated business possibilities that can't be ignored. The question is what approach SK wants to use with regard to this nation. There is a vocal contingent within the corp—especially that older group—that wants to use SK's might to crush the economic strength of the Republic. Find corps within the Republic who are doing well, use SK's mass to undercut them on price and bury them. Some people say this won't work, because the Republic is too restrictive in its trade policies and the citizens are too willing to make economic sacrifices in order to support home-grown corps. They also argue that it is unwise. Why declare economic war on a nation that seems to be growing in strength and could become a strong partner if you play your cards right? These voices favor building stronger trade partnerships with the Republic, getting an in that other megacorps may lack and taking advantage of this increasingly powerful customer base. To some, that's a bitter pill to swallow, because it acknowledges that the land won't be coming back to the AGS anytime soon. Others, though, could care less about national borders, since everyone knows that's not how power is determined in the Sixth World.

- There's are a couple of trog-specific elements to this. First, of course, is the fact that SK must cater to a trog audience if they want to gain a foothold in the Republic. Second, they had better have some troll sales executives working on making the access happen, or they won't get far. Are you a troll in SK looking for a career boost, or do you know such a troll? Find a way to get a position working on negotiations with the Republic.
- Thorn

Another area of interest is Bogotá. Saeder-Krupp was poised to rebuild the city even before the Az-Am War ended, and their efforts have borne fruit. Fifty-five percent of the electricity in the city is now supplied by SK plants, and they pretty much have a monopoly on bridge and road construction. Some parts of Aztechnology have expressed irritation at these facts, but the efficiency of SK's services have helped keep those mutters relatively quiet.

So what does this have to do with trogs? Aztechnology, especially this close to the

homeland, is generally pretty neutral when it comes to trogs. But that's only half the equation. Their opponent in the war, Amazonia, is widely known as a haven for metahumans, and orks and trolls have been implicated in a number of insurgency operations since the war ended. That means a certain portion of the populace is suspicious of orks and trolls in any capacity, despite what larger Aztechnology culture might have to say about it. With power installations and other infrastructure items being targets to insurrectionists, the sight of any ork or troll working in those areas sends some residents into a panic. Saeder-Krupp does not want to mess up a good thing, so they ship people out rather than cause a problem.

- KropKinder is not a runner, so he's not going to connect these dots for you, but I will: What this means for us is that if you want to cast suspicion on a certain group or get people angry at SK, put an ork or troll in the wrong place and watch the nerves kick in.
- Marcos

- I'd complain that using prejudice like that only deepens and extends it, but I've used the unreasonable fear people have of orks or trolls in my favor a number of times, so I can't complain too loudly.
- 2XL

- I'd never find it unreasonable to get a little nervous about someone who can punch through cinder blocks.
- Nephrine

WUXING

POSTED BY: WUXINGWATCHER

Every megacorp has a reputation on the street. The funny thing about Wuxing is, some people think it's a little bland. Not that they aren't into the same myriad of dirty deeds and dark backroom deals as all the other megacorps. They hire runners and do horrible things just like all the rest. But unlike some of the more high-profile megas, they manage to keep it quiet from the rest of the world by seeming like they aren't up to anything major. They are, of course, doing some major things, but as soon as Matrix chatter seems to be turning toward open discussion of it, whoops, here's a flurry of news about the Wu quints! And the issue fades, and people keep thinking Wuxing is less than it is.

What this means for orks and trolls is that they can be hidden behind this same veil of commonness. The streets don't usually give Wuxing a bad rap, or give the megacorp a rap of any kind, and that's the way they like it.

Let me tell you how things are behind the veil. Someone tossed me a message and asked me to tell them what life is like as a Wuxing trog. They used that exact word, and while I felt that little tinge of anger since I didn't know the sender, I still put something together because I thought it was an interesting question, and a topic a lot of people don't know anything about. I'm sure everyone gets all sorts of information about the Japanacorps and their less-than-civil treatment of trogs, but across the East China Sea, we take a different view. The world should know the difference, even though at times they tend to lump "Asians" all into one category thanks to their ignorance. Sorry. Touchy subject. But let's talk trogs.

Wuxing knows the value of people. In the eyes of Wuxing, orks and trolls are people. Different people have different strengths and weaknesses. They have different forces flowing through and around them. Orks and trolls are strong in earth, balanced in fire and water, and weak in air.

- You talk to a person from Wuxing, you're gonna get some Wuxing woo. Just roll with it.
- Sounder

- Dismissal is always easier than understanding.
- Man-for-Many-Names

The forces that saturate and flow around them guide the corporation to what positions they are best directed. These strengths and weaknesses, levels of energy, and proximity to lines of power give executives, guided by powers we rarely understand, a direction to help orks and trolls find their place in the corporate hierarchy.

Strong in earth, they are a foundation to build upon. Sometimes that's literal, which means orks and trolls are used as construction forces. But more often it's a figurative concept, meaning they need to be involved in the planning and initialization of projects. The precepts of Wuxing don't hinder the progression of orks and trolls; they simply guide them to the places they are needed, as they do with every citizen of Wuxing. The nature of their energy is what creates their limitations. Those who can alter their natural focus to become more balanced, or who can shift toward another element, gain access to more variety in their positioning and placement inside the flow of Wuxing at the cost of their original strengths.

The orks and trolls themselves, those who are not in tune with their exact nature, find Wuxing to be a place where the design of your physical form is not what guides you. Certainly there are those within the corporation who cannot understand an ork being aligned with the sky. But it happens, and Wuxing helps guide them in the way that makes the best use of their energy, no matter the expected alignments that others see.

We are all metahuman, though, and jealousy is a fiery emotion that can taint the coolest heads at times. Seeing someone supplant you in a way you do not expect is not easy. The trogs of Wuxing face issues along those lines on a regular, but not rampant, basis. Being so firmly grounded certainly helps, but their opposition is often air, a force that does not often exert its efforts directly. Thus, the conflict is often far more mental than physical. It tends to play out as frustration on the part of the trogs as they find pathways that should be open to them blocked, along with frustration on their opposition's part as the trogs frequently barrel through with little notice. Earth is hard to stop.

- Thing about Wuxing is, they didn't have the same ork and troll numbers that other corps and regions had. So they don't consider it an issue.
- Dr. Spin

- They don't have the numbers because, like most regional cultures, they had very little problem abandoning their unwanted children. Traditionally that meant girl children, but as soon as the Awakening hit, metahumans, especially orks and trolls, joined the list.
- Lei Kung

- Except trolls and orks expressed through Goblinization, so it wasn't as simple as leaving your baby at a church or in a river. Instead it became a generation of forgotten children, forced out into the world.
- Mihoshi Oni

- There are quite a few gangs in the previous Chinese nations that are almost completely composed of metahumans. They started back when the first children were shunned and cast out. Their names are always related to these events: the Shunned, the Outcasts, the Forsaken, etc.
- Lei Kung

As I'm sure many of you are aware, the foundation of Wuxing has shifted and grown in recent times. The tumult among the Big Ten and beyond has led to many seeking emergency financing, and often that support comes from Wuxing. The interest in that financing has led to significant gains; assets acquired after defaults are perhaps greater. There are mutters that Wuxing is using much of its heft in the shadows to make sure some loans default, as they would rather foreclose than just collect cash. They say that in many ways, the emergency financing program has really become a hostile takeover program, and Wuxing is very much in a buying mood.

What does this change mean for orks and trolls? First, it means many are being brought into Wuxing from other backgrounds, entirely unfamiliar with our way of working, and sometimes unfamiliar with the potential inside them. The culture adjustment can cause problems, but we all know the world we live in. We adjust, because there are few options to do otherwise. Second, the type of expansion Wuxing is embarking upon does not happen without planning. Ork and troll executives are finding new advancement opportunities opening up, and their power is growing within the corp. How this will affect the overall shape of the corp, including whether C-suite-level and board demographics will change, is written on the flow of the world's energies.

- One of the funny, but not ha-ha funny, things about the world is how people who used to seem open-minded and tolerant suddenly find their tolerance drying up when they start competing for scarce resources. So some execs who welcomed orks and trolls in various capacities may find themselves wanting to limit their roles if it looks like trogs might start competing for their jobs. Never forget that banding together against things that are different is a basic human instinct.
- 2XL

As far as I know, shadowrunner orks and trolls are treated much like ork and troll employees—that is to say, they will fit where they are needed. Perhaps the most significant difficulty is that while employees have a decent understanding of the Wuxing way of thought, outside runners may not. This means that when Mr. Johnson attempts to explain how diviners have perceived the roles of certain runners, it may vary from their own self-perception. This can cause confusion, or even hostility. Fortunately, most Wuxing Mr. Johnsons are socially skilled enough to make such observations in ways that don't give offense, or to not make them at all and simply deploy

runners as they see fit, regardless of the runners' understanding of what they do best.

- Which still causes some confusion. I know a troll who specializes in combat magic who did multiple jobs for Wuxing that kept putting her in a support position, where someone with manipulation, healing, or illusion skills would function better. She finally asked Mr. Johnson why he kept hiring her if he didn't want her to do her thing, and he gave her the smug smile that people always can deploy and said he was simply happy that her perception of her skills didn't affect her actual performance.
- Elijah

- So as she kept taking jobs from him?
- Pistons

- Yes. After all, nuyen's nuyen. And her illusion spells have become fairly creative and potent.
- Elijah

- As always, the path eventually reveals itself.
- Arete

NEONET (HA HA)

POSTED BY: ERIC WILLIAMS

I'm only doing this mess because we haven't seen where everything will fall from this collapsing house of cards. Whatever happens, it was a shame to lose NeoNET. They played fair with us trogs, and it wasn't bad spending time on their payroll. The streets saw them as such a resilient firm that the view spread to all levels of their existence. Everything about NeoNET was about building and rebuilding from the street's standpoint. At this point, many people think it's not over, especially those low in the corp who don't have much choice in where they go. There are quite a few orks and trolls in that pool, so the streets are seeing the fall of NeoNET as a floodgate of trogs slipping into the pool of SINless and streeters. There's a lot of worry about what comes next, and that a lot of trogs may end in the wrong place.

I'm a realist. My world is coming apart. The corporation that I spent my adult life believing in and working to develop—well, working to get to a place where I could help develop it—is already splintered and soon to be a blip on the megacorporate history radar. By the time my kids are my age, they won't even remember NeoNET. It's like Fuchi, CATCo, or Novatech. The names are remembered because some of them still get slapped on labels, but none of them are megacorporations of any rating. They're subdivisions of subsidiaries, kept around because their brand name is still strong where it's used. Eventually, that will be NeoNET. Except nothing ever got a NeoNET branding, so that conglomeration of corporations will just fade into memory.

As someone told me to prepare something about the trolls and orks of NeoNET, I should probably get to the point. But I needed to clear that up so I can talk about the real future for trogs after NeoNET is no more. Within a year or two—you never know if the Corporate Court is going to drag it out or drop it like a guillotine—NeoNET will be totally dissolved. Transys-Erika had already parted ways, and then parted from each other. Transys-Neuronet is once again separate from Erika, and both have left the majority of the financial responsibilities of NeoNET on former Novatech assets. Looking to the future of trogs, let's look at these three separately. Novatech first, then T-N, and finally Erika, because they've got different styles.

First, Novatech. Why? Because it's really easy. The trolls and orks of Novatech don't have much of an outlook for their future. With the cost of remunerations for Boston and its ongoing quarantine falling primarily at the feet of the hometown megacorp, every asset and subsidiary of the mega will be sold off to other corps. Some of the pieces might get lucky and end up in the hands of Novatech's former co-conspirators, but the biggest sharks currently circling are MCT, Spinrad, and Saeder-Krupp. Not the best places for a trog to end up. As the corp dissolves, the vast majority of trolls and orks are going to end up back in the respective SIN pools of their nations, or slid into the new Global Registry linked to the Corporate Court. Without a corp and living under the laws of a new society, I don't think trolls and orks are going to manage well if they are stuck with Novatech.

- Here's one of the dirty secrets of the Boston quarantine. Plenty of people have asked why it has gone on for so long, and why the disease can't be contained. The answer is the same as it always is in the Sixth World—the corps found a profitable reason to keep the thing going. Once the other nine joined in resolve to pin the blame for CFD on NeoNET, the ongoing deprivations behind the wall became continual justification to levy fines on any and all NeoNET properties. Novatech might still have robust

sales in some sectors, but every time they get a revenue stream going, the Corporate Court peeks behind the wall and finds some justification for punishing them with heavy fines. Just like that, the revenue is gone. Novatech, and many other subsidiaries, won't be able to dig their way out, because the rest of the Big Ten are intent on making the hole ever deeper.

- Sunshine

Transys-Neuronet is a slightly different story. They are skidding along under the radar of blame, but their time as a pet project and personal think tank for Celedyr is over. The dragon has already been removed from his position as head of R&D and been reassigned to head up specific projects—ones that were his from the start—that are all getting extra scrutiny. Failures will be pinned on him directly, rather than being associated with his subordinates or individual project leads. I'm not sure a dragon really cares about corporate blame, but the board will, and they'll cut corp funding. What I like to call the "worry-wart" races (read: non-trogs) are all avoiding him and finding every reason possible to get transferred elsewhere. This is opening up a lot of positions for orks and trolls who don't mind hitching their wagon to a dragon. The percentage of T-N-employed trogs has easily doubled over the past year, and word spread, leading to many displaced orks and trolls finding a new home with T-N.

Last, I look to Erika because it has done the most to give orks and trolls a fair deal in this corporate shake-up. Between the interest and investment in African corps and the mingling it has already done with its Northern European associate, Maersk, Erika has handed many a trog an opportunity to excel within its expanding ranks. Trolls and orks are being given opportunities all over the world to show the executives and Board at Erika (and Maersk) that they deserve more than grunt work. Expect to sit across the table from orks and trolls in negotiations and meetings with Erika for the foreseeable future.

- A nice reminder of the collapsed NeoNET, and good to see where some of their work is going to end up.
- Mr. Bonds

- Biz is still hopping in St. Louis as NeoNET's ARCHology headquarters is done and ready for occupancy. It just needs to come to rest in someone's capable hands.
- /dev/grrl

- Or it can get taken down before it ever sees a real owner. It's a huge symbolic target for a lot of groups, both for and against. Several of those groups could definitely use some publicity with a hit like that, and possibly the good PR for doing it while it's empty.
- Balladeer

- It's still got a public park under it and construction workers. No hit is going to be collateral-free unless you get some lessons from Hestaby.
- Frosty

Don't fool yourself into thinking that NeoNET's plunging status means it's pulled out of the shadows. Yes, their activity is reduced due to funds being a little more scarce, but they're still hiring. Executives are looking for better landing places, corps are trying to interfere with the competition so that their travails don't seem so bad by comparison, and anyone and everyone is looking for insider information that might help them know just when the final hammer will fall.

Experienced shadowrunners, of course, can smell panic from ten kilometers away, and they tend to steer clear of it. Desperation does not tend to breed good planning and loyalty, so taking runs from such clients can be a risk. But if you're a newer shadowrunner looking to break into the biz—or perhaps more to the point, a trog shadowrunner who thinks their metatype has kept people from giving them a fair shake in the field—this might be your chance. NeoNET and their subsidiaries are not in a position to be highly selective about who they hire, so make a connection, show them what you can do, and build a reputation.

- Noob shadowrunners flocking to take on ill-planned jobs conceived by desperate people? What could go wrong?
- Hard Exit

SIERRA, INC.

POSTED BY: ECOTOPE

Street rep: tree huggers. Trolls and orks can just hug bigger trees. I wish I was serious that it were that simple, but the shadows are never that easy-going. Sierra works a delicate balance in the shadows—they play up their mainstream environmentalism in the light of day, but there have been longstanding rumors about them funneling money to some of the more extreme groups there, in-

cluding toxic and eco-terrorism operations. And who better to play the role of the eco-terrorist than the ork or troll toxic shaman dressed in rags and living in radioactive goo?

The streets can be fairly stupid sometimes.

I don't necessarily know much about ork and troll life, but I know about Sierra, and I know how they would treat orks and trolls. That's because it's the same way they treat everyone: as people who need to prove what they are doing to improve the condition of the planet if they want to be judged as worthwhile. The skin you wear doesn't matter nearly as much as the level to which you devote your life to protecting the big blue marble. Within Sierra, Inc. if you love the environment, it doesn't matter what you look like. Led by a dwarf in the past, with a troll (Gary Gray) at the helm now, they have no limits on who can achieve what within their corporate halls.

They say that metatype doesn't matter to them, and their actions often back that up, but the problem is that sometimes it needs to, like housing and laws based on age and development. Troll size isn't considered beyond the oversized chairs they can occasionally find. You would expect that seating wouldn't be an issue when the current head honcho is a troll, but it is. Gary Gray has tried to avoid throwing his weight around and doesn't like forcing aspects of the company to suit him just because he's a troll. His office is large, but no larger than it was for Vogel. Only the furniture has changed, and that was only to accommodate a desk and chair that he could work at, though he spends very little time at that desk. He prefers to be out in the world, improving people's views of trolls while mingling in the nature he wants to preserve.

I have always found the growth of Sierra, Inc. to be quite interesting. They assist with large numbers of orks and trolls moving out of poverty and a life on the streets or in the shadows through their *Plant a SIN* initiative. The program helps anyone, though the most prolific utilization comes from orks and trolls born into the barrens and slums of the world. After Sierra helps them get s SIN, those SINs are almost immediately employed by Sierra. It's a mutually beneficial relationship.

- With the new Global SIN initiative, Sierra is being scrutinized. The CC thinks they are pumping phony SINs out into the world. I'm sure if they're snagging fakes it's for their own operatives, not for the streets.
- Snopes

Where things get truly interesting for Sierra is what kind of opposition they run into. On the one hand, we all know that humans disproportionately lead the megacorporations that do the most to ruin the planet, so that fact at least should take some heat off orks and trolls. But then you have the fact that two of the greatest allies they have in their nature preservation efforts are the elf-led Tírs, and we all know how they feel about orks and trolls. Yeah, having and ork High Prince in Tír Tairngire muted the anti-trog prejudice for a time, but those days are over. The Tírs may not be quite as unfriendly to strangers as they used to be, but they're not exactly welcoming, either. And orks and trolls have severe difficulty being seen as natives, so they can't help but be seen as outsiders. All this is to say that when Sierra finds itself cooperating with the Tírs, they often are aligned against orks and trolls.

This opposition becomes even more direct in different ork and troll settlements across the world. Given that orks and trolls have a higher rate of poverty than other metatypes, they don't always have the resources and capital they may want to build a settlement in a way that follows all codes and regulations. This sort of thing can put them in the crosshairs of Sierra.

Take the Seattle Underground. Even when it's done with proper planning and all the right tools, underground construction brings a host of environmental difficulties. You might interrupt flows of groundwater, you have to plan where your waste will go, you might have different kinds of dust in the air that people really shouldn't be inhaling, and so on and so forth. This means that Sierra has never been entirely comfortable with the idea of the Underground, and now that it's an official district of the city, they have paths they can pursue to advance the longstanding complaints they have had against the place. After the passage of Prop 23, they quickly filed many complaints with the governor about the various environmental ills tied to the Underground, from its insufficient plumbing to its occasional interruption of city water mains to worries about instability being carved into the very foundation of the city.

That did not endear the organization to the ork and troll community. A commonly repeated derisive remark says that Sierra cares about "plants, not people." Activists say that the damage done by the excavation of the Underground is small potatoes compared to the devastation that megacorps wreak on a daily basis, and the people sitting on top of the megacorps are living in the lap of luxury, polluting the world to make themselves even wealthier than they already are, while the poor people of the Underground are having trouble making a home for themselves thanks to Sierra's legal actions. Add to this the fact that the heads of megacorps have the resources to defend themselves from any legal action and sometimes delay it indefinitely, while people in the Underground can maybe afford to pay a lawyer for ten hours or less of work, and the causes of resentment just grow.

- Incidentally, this is why there were some pro-trog groups who had no desire for the Underground to be part of Seattle. Make it an official part of the city, and it has jurisdiction. Plus, the district is officially subject to the laws of the city, including environmental protections that are on the books, such as they are. When the Underground was not really part of the city, Sierra and anyone else could complain about what was going on down there, and the government of Seattle could issue proclamations, but no one had legal force to do anything. Now, the government has power, so the government can act.
- Sunshine

The good news is that Sierra is somewhat less heartless than the big megas of the world, and some of the complaints of Underground residents have started to get through. The corp has realized that people of the Underground have no real desire to mess up the drinking water of the region, or cause other problems. They just want a place to live. So rather than continuing to take a punitive approach to Underground affairs, Sierra has started at looking at ways to support Underground infrastructure, helping build pipes and such where necessary, and delivering training in safe ways to expand the network of tunnels. Their previous efforts at interference left them with a deficit of trust, but they are making progress in closing that gap.

- Where there is mistrust, there are people willing to exploit it. Plenty of people who want to keep Sierra off their backs manufacture a little evidence that the enviro-corp is thinking of cracking down on some trog settlement or another, and it's not too hard to get people up in arms and ready to crack some heads. If you want Sierra distracted from what you're doing, that's a good way to get their attention focused in the wrong direction.
- Ecotope

SPINRAD INDUSTRIES

POSTED BY: SPINSIDER

Everyone sees SpIn—Spinrad Industries—with Johnny at the forefront. That's not to say they're all pro-human or anything, but rather that they see everything with an extreme twist. That doesn't hold back orks and trolls, and in fact SpIn's sports franchises make a killing with their trog athletes who get plastered on advertising all over the world's major metroplexes.

Thanks to a whole lot of SpIndependence, the views of orks and trolls inside Spinrad aren't exactly stable. You can't expect the same views and attitude from someone in Lisbon as you'd get from someone in St. Louis. In Lisbon, they're all going to be super pro-ork, rooting for Tucker Lang and the Lisbon Navigators, the only international team to beat an NFL team during last year's exhibitions. In St. Louis, you're looking at a lot of troll-love as Hakrin Gresham is currently devastating the urban brawl scene for SpIn's St. Louis Razors farm club. It goes the other way too: SpIn citizens in Africa are currently hating trolls thanks to Kurg Dansk, the outrider for S-K's urban brawl franchise in the FAL (Free African League).

So I hope you see and understand my point with this. Views on orks and trolls inside SpIn aren't based on a racial bias as much as a competitive streak that infects every aspect of the corp. While you won't find Dansk's detractors burning troll effigies in the hallways outside a troll's housing quarters, you will find that trolls get scrutinized more heavily and passed over for promotion more often when they are currently out of favor in their particular locale. The winds of change blow frequently, but inside SpIn it's best to know which way they're currently blowing before you decide if it's time to pitch for that new project.

Sports teams and clubs within the corp are always looking for ringers and a little extra juice here and there, so trolls and orks get brought in on anything where muscle might help. They also play the occasional joke, all getting together to join the same team for things like football, roller derby, volleyball, and other physical sports, where they dominate the mostly human teams.

- Side track—I was breaking into a SpIn housing complex to plant some evidence a few years back for a Johnson. I was tucked away in a vent and slithering over the gymnasium when a volleyball game starts up below me. It was a team of dwarfs playing a team of trolls. It was comical, but not near as one-sided as you might think. Dwarfs have a great dig game and trolls have a hard time reading when a ball is going out, so they play all sorts of garbage. Trolls won, but the entire crowd—a fully mixed bag—got into it and enjoyed the fun.
- Mika

I'm not sure if SpIn is going to stay so fun-loving and exciting in the future, but up until this point, they've been a good place for trogs. The corporate acquaintances that they've been courting would likely calm the boisterous nature of the wild megacorp, just like they seem to be calming the corp's namesake. I'm on the inside but not that high up, so I don't know how serious his efforts are or if he's playing a con. But I imagine the latter would turn out very badly if it were to be discovered, or even if it just played out and ended up being true.

From what I've heard, doing runs for SpIn as an ork or troll is unpredictable. It's one thing doing a run for a dragon, where the boss' thinking is so far ahead of your own that you can't figure out the twists of their plots in advance. Working for SpIn can be like working for someone who thinks they have the strategic and tactical genius of a dragon but actually is a combination of crafty planning, impatient recklessness, and occasional impulsive leaps. With the dragons, you usually can make sense of their plans after the fact; with SpIn, you may never understand the moves they made, because there is a distinct possibility that they made no sense. And the boss likes it that way—he's always felt that unpredictability is one of his corp's strengths, and you can't be unpredictable if you're always doing the right thing.

What this means is this: Don't expect to be treated fairly. Don't expect to be judged solely on your merits. Don't expect to be discriminated against. Don't expect that because you're a troll and they love trolls in St. Louis, they'll love you there. Don't expect *anything*. Be ready for everything. If playing at racism—or deploying actual racists against you—fits what the plan calls for, that's what they'll do. Doesn't make sense to you? Great. That's the plan.

MAERSK

POSTED BY: CAPTAIN ULV

They ship stuff, right? So trolls and orks work on their ships and docks. There's plenty of machines in this world to do the lifting and hauling for us, but there are always times when old-fashioned biological muscle is needed, and for those occasions, we're available.

Getting a public opinion on a corp requires the public to know a little more than they usually do. Hence the reason it sucks being a name seen everywhere but understood nowhere. This megacorp has some serious smokescreening up with the whole "single name posted on shipping containers all over the world" thing.

Short of it: There is no public opinion. You only have an opinion on Maersk if you know the real Maersk.

If Maersk were just a shipping company, I'd have little to worry about every time I board one of their massive vessels. They started out basic but expanded quickly, and now they dabble in markets and fields all across the globe. Obviously, or else they wouldn't be a multinational AA-rated megacorporation. While being more, they also have the advantage of people knowing less. For example, Maersk has their own special operations security force. Scary fraggers who I don't like meeting, on or off the water. Why do I mention them? Because a lot of them are trolls and orks. Seems a troll with some cyberfins and a set of gills or an air tank can move at quite a clip underwater.

It's not just there that orks and trolls are valued in the Maersk hierarchy. The entire company has niches and fields that their HR people seem to believe are best filled by certain metatypes. Docks around the world often have ork workers. Maersk docks often match this, but when it comes to going into those other docks and looking to negotiate contracts, Maersk has familiar tusked faces to send in, men and women with time both on the dock and at the negotiation table.

It seems a universal principle at Maersk that every employee is valued for what they bring to the company. Orks and trolls aren't necessarily treated in a friendly way, but they are definitely treated fair.

- The Maersk-Erika thing? Who's got info?
- Snopes
- Maersk has been in talks and associated with a lot of corps over the past few years. Speculation that doesn't pan out, mergers that just aren't feasible, and ego battles that can't be overcome with money are the biggest roadblocks.
- Mr. Bonds
- And runners. The entire Megacorp Revision has been a corporate shadow war. Everyone is looking to keep everyone else from making the needed moves to jump up. Sabotaging mergers with planted espionage, security breaches, and a host of other moves has kept all the doubles and singles from hooking up and going triple or hooking up with a triple.
- Fianchetto

Both inside and outside of the shadows, Maersk has a reputation for being brusque and businesslike. So while it may not feel like the corp cares for you if you're an ork or troll, that's because the corp does not truly care for anyone. Having people who care for you is the job of your friends and family; the corp strongly recommends that employees get some, though of course they do not provide an abundance of free time so that employees can make that happen. Don't expect them to be pleasant, and be ready to maybe haul a box or two at some point in time, and you'll be fine.

UNIVERSAL OMNITECH

POSTED BY: CORP CANVASSER

The choice of such a plain and relatively generic corporate moniker is one of those hints that tells you these guys don't want to be noticed or pigeonholed into any single field, limited to the work and income in one area. The name shows that they truly wish to be a universal megacorporation.

Within those same ideals, we find their views on orks and trolls. They're open-minded and looking to utilize them in whatever fashion best fits into their universal bottom line. Or so the assumption on the street needs to go, because there isn't anything to go on.

Connecting UO with orks and trolls—that's what the famous VPN JackPoint has me doing. I finally get tapped for something, and it's this. I should make the best of it and stop complaining.

I could say I have an easy one here because UO is, on the surface, a remarkably neutral corporation. But that's the reason why we do things like

this—why we ask people like me to dig deeper and shine a little light on the truth.

It doesn't take a massive Matrix search to discover UO's main interests are biotech and mining, with a side serving of food production. Sure, they cover hundreds of other fields, but these are the rings where they throw their heaviest punches. With a deep desire to win those fights, they manage quite a number of internal assets to best maximize efficiency. That's what the memos say, at least. UO has no problem with trolls and orks, as long as they sign up for research and augmentation studies. If a troll or ork citizen is not willing to participate, UO wants nothing to do with them. While that sounds cruel, we don't live in a nice world, and UO knows they don't have to answer to anyone but their shareholders.

You won't find many orks or trolls in the upper offices, but you will find thousands of them augmented in a myriad of ways to better enhance the security and labor pool at UO facilities, especially in the arena of mining. The augmentations they get are also not all standard. The biotech side uses subjects for product research and testing. It's usually favorable, as the company doesn't want to lose labor time, but not every experiment goes right.

- Never pictured UO as being so prejudiced.
- Butch

- It's not prejudice. There is no malice in their efforts. They just use the tools available for the best purpose. Are you prejudiced against the hammer because you always use the screwdriver? No. You just use the best tool for the job.
- Beaker

This general sentiment extends to the shadows. When UO needs work of a physical nature, they turn to orks and trolls. If they are looking for hacking or magic, well, the same groups may not get as much of a shot. You'll find plenty of complaints about that in shadows, but within UO, you'll find plenty of execs who don't care.

- And if they're hiring chemists, they won't look for trolls, will they, Beaker? Because that's just the way the world works.
- 0rkCE0

- I can't tell you how much I don't need a lecture from someone else explaining how difficult it is to be me. I promise you that I am aware.
- Beaker

LONE STAR

POSTED BY: TELESCOPE

This one's easy. Or at least, easy to describe, because things are clear on the surface, but the psychological underpinnings of the situation they create can get complicated. The boys in blue are thought to use orks and trolls for one purpose and one purpose only: their goon squad. Need a door kicked in, send a troll. Need a perp dragged out, send in the orks. With shiny badges on their chests, the trogs of Lone Star get the job done in the most meat-headed way possible.

Inside Lone Star, trogs get pigeonholed. The corp needs bodies on the street, and these guys and gals can usually take the place of two to four smaller metas in any physical situation. The best and brightest can usually work their way up in rank to get a little power, but it's always through the beat. Trogs aren't born into positions at Lone Star, no matter who their parents were.

Trolls usually find themselves at the top of the list of candidates for the riot squad, with orks right under them. The truly brutish don't move up much, but those with a little more upstairs get a chance to earn spots in SWAT, High Threat, anti-terror, and especially vice, where they end up going undercover in places no one else can. Among the brass, you'll find a few trolls and orks. There's a small bias to keep them smacking skulls together, but if they've got the brights and attitude, they can struggle up the corporate ladder.

- Going up the ladder for trogs is a lot more common after an injury, especially one that limits them on the street.
- Stone

In the corporate offices, you won't find the appropriate percentage of trogs to match company census data or racial distribution expectations based on Lone Star's citizen percentages. The company line is something along the lines of "Of course not—we've got more ork and troll officers than any other security corporation in the world," but that doesn't exactly cover why they don't move up from the street.

There's a simple fact here: It's due to racial prejudice.

Lone Star is not really a racially diverse megacorp. They use orks and trolls on the streets, elves in HR, and dwarfs in their tech departments. If there's a stereotype to be had, you'll find it at

Lone Star. In their terms, they shoot straight and don't worry about little things like people's feelings when it comes to running their corp and assigning people to positions. Socially or in the workplace, Lone Star doesn't hold back.

In other people's terms, they have a lot of trouble seeing past people's size and shape, and they aren't really interested in learning how to do it, so they frame their deficit as a straight-talking virtue.

One of the reasons they get away with this is that road goes both ways. Orks and trolls under the badge have no problem talking down to anyone in their jurisdiction. They carry that concept of Texas swagger to a whole new level.

- Some of the elements discussed in connection with Ares, law enforcement, and trogs occur here, too, but they're already stated in the Ares write-up, I won't repeat them here.
- Sunshine

DOCWAGON

POSTED BY: BIGDOC

Most of DocWagon's advertising is pretty widely targeted but strongly based on the clientele in the region, so views on their use of orks and trolls usually coincides perfectly with the views of the local population. Positive views often show a troll heroically crashing through walls or braving a hail of gunfire to rescue a client, while less-friendly locales replace that troll with a human in sleek armor.

The image of the massive troll helping to haul several clients out of trouble at once has been an advertising staple in every region with a moderate or better view on trolls. It becomes a pretty standard idea in these areas that if you need help, you'll get a big troll swooping in to save you. The truth of the matter inside DocWagon is a little different.

Sadly, trolls on the line are limited. Orks get more options, but not a lot more. Trolls are most common in ground-based High Threat Response (HTR) teams, where their additional mass doesn't detract from the operational capabilities of their transport. Air units don't have the lift capacity to sacrifice for a single troll who weighs as much as four geared-up humans. Orks are a little better; they don't usually more than double a human's mass, and they still bring some extra bulk to the team when it's needed.

It's also a sad fact that most trolls and orks never got the background education or opportunity to be EMTs and paramedics. Sure, they can work toward it, but there are plenty of hurdles in their way, including pushy recruitment toward the Response side of things and a bunch of external cultural racism around the headquarters in Atlanta. DocWagon has been supportive of Atlanta's ork and troll population out in Sweetwater, but that's a corporate-level choice. It doesn't make a lot of locally based citizens happy.

Moving up in DocWagon is also quite a bitch. The Atlanta culture doesn't permeate every office, but the Atlanta HQ team does a lot of micromanaging, so they have heavy pull when it comes to promotions. Orks make the executive cut more often than trolls, but neither of them are represented in the numbers one should expect if all things in the corp were equal. This shouldn't really be a surprise, because no one who lives in the real world expects them to be.

- I'm about out of patience with the "racism is just the way of the world" argument.
- 0rkCE0

There can (and have) been detailed analyses of how ork and troll hiring practices serve to keep them out of high-ranking positions. There are simple things (people reacting negatively to Or'zet names, people justifying not hiring or advancing trolls because they don't have the proper facilities) and more complicated things (the way socializing contributes to promotions and how people in a corporate environment choose who they socialize with) that help show that the way DocWagon works is not because someone passed around a memo saying "Don't hire or promote orks or trolls." It's more complicated than that, which also means any eventual fix is more complicated. Deeply ingrained attitudes don't just switch off.

TELESTRIAN

POSTED BY: TELTELLER

I wrote a little starter comment up here that said, "Snooty elves put everyone in their place. Trolls are their favorite meatshields." This was my best street view in a nutshell.

The nice thing about the elves at Telestrian is that they have no desire to sugarcoat anything. Trolls and orks are groomed from an early age for

specific work, but by and large that work is designed to keep them down. They operate within the lowest rung of the social caste and have very little opportunity for advancement. All trogs are subjugated by the corporation.

Janitors at Telestrian come in four varieties: drone, ork, troll, and screw-up. You don't get a job this low in the Telestrian job pool unless you're a trog or you've really pissed off an elf. I'd worry about being both, but unless a trog does something really offensive, most of the elves just pity them. They expect them to be crude.

The only other place you find trogs in any quantity at Telestiran is on their security teams. This is where the grooming matters. Trolls and orks who work as security, and especially those who operate as private or personal security for Telestrian executives, are all raised from an early age and treated differently than the rest of their kind. They are taught that they're special, that other trogs are lazy or inferior to them and unqualified to be a member of such an elite group. Anyone questioning the brainwash finds themselves out on the street. Not just demoted, but stripped of their citizenship and removed from the corporation.

Life as a trog in Telestrian is one of dichotomy. Either you live in squalor with the rest of the janitors and laborers, or you get to hobnob with the upper echelon, or at least take some bullets for them.

- Watch some trids set in early twentieth century England and pay attention to the people who were the heads of the household staff, the butler and the housekeeper. They have a certain air of authority, a level of comfort in their lives, and a degree of trust given to them by the lords and ladies of the house. The system has been good to them, and they advanced in large part because of their loyalty to their masters and their adherence to the existing system. One of the things they do in their position is enforce the existing order, helping those at the top explain why the system works. But if there ever comes a moment where they forget their place, there is a vast amount of power and wealth above them to remind them that they are not, in fact, one of the nobles. That's what it's like for the few ork and troll executives at Telestrian. They may feel great most of the time and think they have a good life, but the minute they forget their place, they will be forcefully reminded of how they fit into the elven corp.
- Sunshine

ATLANTEAN FOUNDATION

POSTED BY: CREEKCHILD

Thanks to the Atlantean Foundation's seriously adventurous public image, the world sees trogs working for them as fedora-wearing treasure hunters stealing their style cues from a hundred-year-old movie. It leads people to believe that if they can hunt artifacts, they can represent the Atlanteans.

The AF has been a friend to Sweetwater Creek since the earliest days, when they provided surveyors to start making changes to the local land and infrastructure to better suit the needs of the new residents. As some may know, Sweetwater Creek is an area of the Atlanta sprawl inhabited by the bulk of orks and trolls in the region. Racial tensions pushed them there, but hard work provided them a place to be safe and call home. The AF has since proven, through both their own internal practices and their support of a place like Sweetwater, to be a solid workplace and environment for orks and trolls.

Inside the AF the opportunities for trogs are unlimited, and I've found that the majority of AF employees aren't troubled at all by my size, even when it occasionally causes an issue. We move up both social and corporate echelons. We work in every field and every office in the world. We don't get stares when we enter a room unless we invite them ourselves with a striking dress or a new hornament. And best of all, we don't get forced to live a lesser life because our life costs a little more. The AF is remarkably fair in how they subsidize items for us, and they don't dock our pay with a trog-tax.

The trogs of Atlantean get to lead field research teams, work in labs with ancient artifacts, head up museum exhibits, and when they need to dig in the dirt or fight off a security threat, it's because they want to, not because it was the only job the corp deemed them fit for.

- The only thing with the AF is magic. If you've got the Talent, they give you some extra love. Even if you're a trog.
- Elijah

GRID OVERWATCH DIVISION

POSTED BY: GLITCH

Theoretically, this should be one of the places on earth where being a trog doesn't matter. After all, who really knows the metatypes of any GOD agent? You meet them in the Matrix, not in meatspace. They could be anything, and it doesn't matter. The only thing of consequence is their skill in the Matrix, and if they've got it, they've got it. And that is, in fact, the way things often work out. Prove your stuff, and GOD will be interested, regardless of what you look like.

- Word to the wise: People on the cyberstreets often talk about how the best way to apply for a job with GOD is to hack into one of their hosts. While the idea makes some primitive sort of sense, in the end, don't. First of all, those hosts play for keeps, so you shouldn't be hacking into one in the hopes that you may get a job, because you'd be lucky if the best thing you come out of it with is a fried deck. It would be better if you had an actual payday motivating you (and paying for the damage) rather than some faint hope. Second, breaking into their hosts is not as persuasive a résumé item as you may hope. Yeah, they're looking for people with considerable hacking talent, but they're also looking for law-and-order types, people who can be controlled and operate in their structure. When their first introduction to you is through severe law-breaking activities, that doesn't make them think that you've got real potential to work in their virtual halls.
- Pistons

Now we get to the complicated part: recruitment. It's a large world and an even larger Matrix, and GOD has a lot to do. They can't scour

every corner of the Matrix to find ace hackers who fit their psychological profile, so they did what any competent corporation does. They built pipelines of talent. And that's where you sometimes run into problems.

The first pipeline is the most obvious, and also one of the easiest to see problems for orks and trolls. As you might guess, GOD is an active recruiter of top graduates from CalTech, Dartmouth, Georgia Tech, Rice University, and the like, and all of those universities have close corp ties, so the corps will fast-track the students they want to eventually hire. Then you add the fact that none of these prestigious universities are cheap. That leads to them typically having a disproportionately low representation of orks and trolls in their ranks, which means that particular pipeline isn't a great way to get orks and trolls to come to GOD.

A second pipeline is hacker rings and clubs. Not all such rings are ripe for recruitment—the Choson Seoulpa Ring, for example, does not end up having many of their members join GOD, and the philosophies of the Cracker Underground don't tend to mesh well with law-enforcement work—but places like KivaNet and Technicolor Streams can be good places to find up-and-coming hackers, or individuals who may not have had the skills or money to attend a top university but have developed into top-rank hackers.

But the same problem that hits elite universities also affects these groups. As discussed in the *Data Trails* download, while hackers pride themselves on being about the code and nothing but the code, they tend to pull members from people they know, and the people they know tend to look like them. So like the universities, the hacker clubs are not always representational of the larger population.

But there are exceptions, particularly from people who have noticed this problem and determined to do something about it. One example, the Biloxi Technical Institute, will be discussed later in this posting, so I want to look at some trog-specific hacking organizations.

While Bull will steadfastly deny having any direct involvement in it, the Hez Hackers of Seattle wouldn't exist without him. They also wouldn't exist without the move that made the Underground an official district of Seattle. With Brackhaven enmeshed in scandal for pretty much the entire period between his last election and his resignation, little got done in terms of Underground infrastructure, but the interim government took up the reins and put some long-neglected pieces of the puzzle into place. They knew, of course, that there was a lot of work to be done to regain trust in the government, so when they looked at a proposal from an up-and-coming group of ork hackers who would sculpt and maintain the district's host for a reasonable price, they went for it. So suddenly a small group of skilled hobbyists received a considerable influx of cash, which both helped them improve their skills while also bringing some skilled hackers to their doors.

The connection to Bull is that most of the core leaders of the Hez Hackers (as they call themselves) were trained or hired by Bull, who is conscientious about directing resources to his ork kin. The group's leader, Saka'am, is a Salish ork who moved to the Underground when she was three, got to know Bull as she was growing up, and did at least half a dozen Matrix jobs for him. I'm not saying he told her to found a hacker group, but the group wouldn't exist if he hadn't put her in a position to do so.

- You overrate my influence. She's smart and driven, and very dedicated to her fellow orks. If I hadn't hired her, others would have—I know, because they did. I'm happy to call her a friend, but I sure as hell didn't make her into what she is.
- Bull

- As you may guess by the Or'zet name, the Hez Hackers do a lot better by orks than trolls. You can build your pipeline to tusks with this group, but not horns.
- 2XL

The Hez Hackers may be a fairly new group, but given that the Underground's host is frequently targeted by Matrix vandals (surprise, surprise), the members have had plenty of chances to show off their skills, and they have attracted the attention of GOD. Two members were recently selected to don the GOD fedora. Though not Saka'am, as she has frequently said that she intends to work in and for the Underground until she dies.

Meanwhile, similar things have happened in the Black Forest Republic, which, like the Underground, has a host to establish and an interest in training residents to maintain and guard it. The Grendel

Group, though, has taken on a lot of work beyond just keeping the Republic's host in good shape. They have grown in strength along with their nation, and they have become the first arm of the nation to take action outside of the borders of the Republic. Human Nation, Alamos 20K, and other hate groups have been targeted by the Grendel Group, and they're not just about slowing down their operations or causing annoyances. They're gathering information, getting names from membership rolls, and looking at ways to take the fight to the individuals propping up these organizations. Just how they will do it is unclear, but they are collecting a clearinghouse of data, and the hate organizations should be plenty worried, because they aren't collecting names just to sit on them.

- Note that while the Grendels may be acting in the interest of the nation, they are a private, not public, group. They operate somewhat similar to privateers, or independent patriotically minded hackers who just happen to be moved to do something about those who would speak ill of their people. As we're all familiar with the importance of deniability, this layer of separation should not surprise us.
- Thorn

With a decently long history to their credit, an impressive series of victories, and a state-of-the-art cybersecurity training program, the Grendels have quite naturally drawn the attention of GOD, and a number of ork and troll hackers from the Group are now overwatching the whole grid.

SEATTLE GOVERNMENT

POSTED BY: SUNSHINE

Well, here we are, with a brand-new governor. Corinne Potter defeated Nikola Taul in the runoff, and we have a Technocrat leading the city. People have been studying Potter's past to get some idea of how she's going to govern, but she's never held public office before. She's worked on several campaigns (supposedly) and written several position papers, but who knows how much her work reflected her ideas, and how much they were influenced by the politicians she served? Since her past record doesn't give us much to go on, the main source for discerning her thinking is her campaign speeches. What do we get from that? Information barely more useful than the fact that she likes puppies and ice cream. She wants to ensure all Seattle hosts stay current with updated Matrix standards, and she wants to upgrade all public grids. She offers no firm position on a global SIN registry other than to say she would be able to adapt Seattle's technology to whatever requirements may come. She promises economic stability, skilled law enforcement, and no major changes that would make the corps unnecessarily uncomfortable. And that's about it.

- Policy is great, policy is important, but policy wonks who cannot connect with people don't get elected to high offices. Conversely, people who can connect but don't know drek about policy can still get into office.
- Kay St. Irregular

She had certain advantages in the election: First, she is a gifted communicator and connects with people both in person and in broadcast. Second, while her noncommittal approach to the global SIN question neither surprised nor alienated her base, the similar approach stated by Nikola Taul alienated Puyallup and Redmond voters who thought she was getting ready to sell them down the river in exchange for a shot at the seat of power. Those voters turned away from her, helping deny her that seat. And third, Potter had no connections to Kenneth Brackhaven, which was entirely positive in the current political climate.

With those knowns comes a host of unknowns. Interim Governor Natoko Munakata made some moves to make the government kinder, gentler, and more open, but without any sort of mandate, she couldn't do anything radical, even if she wanted to. Any real change will have to come from Potter, and there is lots of guessing (but no real certainty) about what she'll do. Here are some of the pressing issues that really have people scratching their heads:

- Treatment of the Underground. Brackhaven, of course, hated it. Munakata was much more moderate toward it, to the point of hiring homegrown organizations to take care of a lot of the basic district needs (though not law enforcement, of course—Knight Errant is on the case, which is the part of the transition that is most likely to make people regret their pro-district vote). Where will

Potter land? Will her Technocratic leanings push her to bring in the bright and shiny, instead of staying with Underground-based contractors?

- Global SIN registry. Will she promote it? Will she fight it? Who knows?
- The ACHE. If she wants a technological showpiece in the middle of the city, it's sitting there waiting for her. But what is she going to do with it? How much will she spend on it, and who will benefit from it?
- Foreign relations. No other governor needs to worry about foreign policy quite like the governor of Seattle does. Given Seattle's existence as a UCAS island in the middle of the Salish-Shidhe Council, the governor needs to deal with imports, exports, border control, and many other aspects of foreign relations that the governor of Indiana never even dreams about. And not far off is Tír Tairngire, which always seems ready to cause some fuss or another, especially with a Telestrian running the country. Both nations are not hostile to Seattle—they do much better with a city that can keep money flowing to them, after all—but both are also quite willing to see if they can take advantage of a political novice. How will Potter handle negotiations with these nations?
- The corps. Look, we all know Potter never makes it to the top seat without at least some corp backing, and the corps in general seem quite willing to work with her. But if there's one truism of Sixth World government, it's that you can't keep every corp happy all the time. Eventually, their agendas will butt heads, and the governor will have to take some sort of side. The united front the Japanacorps are presenting will put some serious pressure on Potter to see things their way, but Potter's Horizon ties (we don't need to say alleged anymore, do we?) raise interesting questions about just how loyal she'll be to her home corp and how difficult it might be to sway her to any other point of view.

- The fact that the Dawkins Group got someone into the governor's office should make us all nervous. You can be sure they didn't just do this on a whim—there is something they're after, and they will use every bit of their social engineering power to get it. Anyone who thinks Potter is going to be mainly hands-off, letting the city run itself, is fooling themselves. Sure, it will look that way, but the Dawkins people are social magicians, always carrying out their real work just out of sight.
- Plan 9

- Allow me to remind you that the Dawkins affiliation remains just a rumor at this point. Even if she is connected to Dawkins, we have no evidence that she ran her campaign as anything other than an individual.
- Fianchetto

- Right. An individual who was in the right place at the right time to inherit some decent polling numbers from a suddenly dead man, an individual who seemed to invent much of her background out of whole cloth, and an individual who built a slick and victorious campaign. But we don't have any proof of larger connections, right?
- Snopes

- Any time Plan 9 and Snopes seem like they're in agreement, a cold fist grips my stomach.
- The Smiling Bandit

Those are only a few things she has on her plate going forward. Note what didn't make the list? That's right: trog rights. It's just so easy to shuffle them to the background when anything—and I mean *anything*—else comes up. Potter will have to figure out how she'll deal with Seattle Underground Mayor Kathleen Shaard, who is new to political life but has been involved in her community for most of her young life and knows how to tap into their energy. Will Potter build an allegiance with her or decide to butt heads right from the start? Shaard won't play nice just because Potter smiles and says nice things. She'll demand real action and real commitment, so it will be interesting to see if Potter antes up.

- Shaard's not naïve, so she doesn't exactly have a huge list of demands for the new governor. She figures that the Underground managed on its own for a while, so even if it's an official district, it should maintain its ethos of self-sustainability. The good news for Potter is that she won't have to make a long list of concessions to keep Shaard happy. The bad news is that she won't have a ton of political leverage over the district, which is of course Shaard's goal.
- Kay St. Irregular

That's the external side of the government. What about working for the government?

Government jobs are a curious thing in the Sixth World. The pay at the lower levels is better than a lot of entry-level corp jobs, and jobs often come with DocWagon Basic coverage (though some cost-sharing is usually involved). Advancement, though, is a bitch. Supervisory positions are often in short supply—government tries to stretch its funding as far as possible, and that often means very lean staffs, and mid-level supervisors are the first cuts made. Plus, once you get to a certain level, it's elections and politics that determine who gets what position, and playing that game is not something everyone is cut out to do. End result: There are a fairly high levels of orks and trolls at lower levels of government, but the numbers thin as you go up the ranks.

The strange part of the world of the government worker comes when they are trying to do the things workers are supposed to do. Sometimes it's straightforward—pave this, file that—but other times there is an ostensible amount of authority the workers are supposed to be exercising, when of course they are not the ultimate powers in the world. Sometimes their lack of power is clear—you set foot on megacorp territory, and your authority ends. Other times, though, things are a little murkier, which tends to be demoralizing for the government workers. They may be repairing pipes, or surveying property, or attempting some form of inspection, when someone with a suit gently tells them that the particular service they were attempting is not required. Or wanted. Maybe some of the new ones put up a little fight, citing the instructions they were given or the part of the law they're obeying, but the people in the suits know how to make it clear that it would be best if they simply went away and did something else.

The point is, government workers have to get used to being over-ruled, and that goes double

for lower-level employees. The uncaring, slothful government worker is a longstanding cliché with some truth behind it, but you understand that cliché better when you see how much time the workers spend being thwarted. They act like people who have been repeatedly shown that their efforts don't matter, because that's pretty much the case.

This means you have a lot of orks and trolls in government making some decent money but having their will to live slowly drained out of them. Go to them. Make friends. Give them something to care about. You never know what kind of access they might be able to introduce you to.

- Remember that, by and large, government security sucks. That includes cyber and physical security. Don't get too cocky—when it's important, they'll contract out, or GOD will volunteer to keep an extra close eye on things because it's sometimes easier for them to act in a preventative way than to mount an effort to fix the damage after someone makes a big score in a government host. So yeah, sometimes there's a rude surprise waiting for you, but a lot of time the mid- to lower-level stuff is pretty much protected by thin chains and padlocks. Make a friend of a government employee, and this stuff can be yours for the taking. You just have to figure out how to find something at these levels that's worth something.
- Mika

BILOXI TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

POSTED BY: COSMO

Building a prestigious university isn't easy. Look at the lists of best universities in the world sometime, then look for any institutions than are younger than a century and a half. You'll have to move down the list for a while to find one. Why is that? Because a significant part of college rankings is based on the reputation of the university. This shows up in a number of ways—the more people who want to go to a university, the more they can reject, and the better the academic résumés of those accepted will be. That shows up in the rankings. The more notable research that comes from a university, the more the graduates accomplish, the more intriguing the faculty, the more the university's reputation will grow. That, too, shows up in rankings. And then there's money. Harvard has an endowment of more than fifty *billion* nuyen. Oxford has a relatively paltry seven billion. On top of that, major universities rake in hundreds of millions in alumni donations annually. You just don't build pots of money and pools of donors like that overnight, which means that competing with established universities on the playing fields they built decades or centuries ago is extremely difficult.

When you see an up-and-coming university, what you are often seeing is an existing organization in the middle of a transformation. There may be an endowment and a donor base, but someone or something is stepping in to transform the institution and take it to a new level. As an example, take George Ellery Hale, who joined the board of Throop Polytechnic Institute in 1907 with a vision of transforming it into a science and research institution. He brought a gifted fundraiser in as president, helped wrangle some private money, and convinced the state to increase the college's budget by ten times all by itself. He brought in great minds, including a physicist who won the school its first Nobel Prize in 1923. By this time the school had a new name: the California Institute of Technology. It also had piles of new money, including a big gift that helped lure that Nobel-Prize-winner over. In terms of current-day nuyen, that gift was well into the eight figures.

In some ways, the transformation took time. In other ways, it was startlingly fast, from little-known institution to one receiving millions in public and private funds and the most prestigious awards in science in just over a decade and a half.

In Biloxi, Mississippi, CAS, a dwarf named Hearst Pineyard aims to beat that record. He's not chosen an easy path—while Hale joined an institution with at least some academic integrity, Pineyard is building his dream on the bones of an institution known far more for fleecing students and handing out worthless diplomas than doing anything academically worthwhile. But the institution he purchased had a few advantages: an existing system for processing student loans, a few faculty members who might be worth salvaging, and a location that was near the highway and surrounded by a lot of developable land. Pineyard also had another advantage working for him: a huge pile of cash.

- The origin of Pineyard's fortune is a subject of continued debate. Back in the last century, individuals could make

a fortune by coming up with some hot new product or computer program, but in our century, patent law—and almost every other type of law—greatly favors the corps, so it's difficult for an individual to pile up money outside of a corp. So that has left Pineyard open to all sorts of speculation about where his money came from. Some popular theories include that Pineyard was the head of a vast smuggling network, or a talislegger who struck a huge deposit of orichalcum, or the recipient of one of the larger mystery bequests from Dunkelzahn's will (such as the twenty million for developing a smog-cleaning plant or eight million for breeding Ecuadorian honey ants). Most of the speculation does not account for how much wealth he truly has, since his activities in Biloxi could only be supported by a fortune that rises to the billions.

- Mr. Bonds

Pineyard not only bought the college, which was a large building in a strip mall, but also some nearby stores, a junkyard, a tiny private airstrip, and other assorted properties. From this, he built a university, which he called the Biloxi Technical Institute. Then he set about two goals: Making the university prestigious, and making it serve primarily metas, especially dwarfs.

The second part was easier, but with a complication. The combination of being a private university and making the right political donations gave him the chance to do just about anything he wanted. The complication is that while there were plenty of applicants, a large number of them didn't have the means to pay for the type of education Pineyard envisioned, so he needed a large supply of scholarships or other financial aid. In modern education, that means corporate support.

This is where you run into a chicken-and-egg problem—corps don't want to give you money until they know you can generate the type of recruits they need, but it's really difficult to generate the proper results without adequate corporate funding. Pineyard got through this by betting on himself. For four years—four years!—he funded a large portion of the university's operations out of his own pocket. Yeah, he had some money coming through in various financial aid packages and outside scholarships, and some students ponied up at least a share of their own tuition, but Pineyard was still on the hook for hundreds of millions of nuyen per year. After four years, his out-of-pocket expenses, including his property purchases and capital development spending, had to be well north of one billion nuyen.

- That's insane. It's a nonprofit university, so it's not like he'll ever be able to pocket the profits once outside support starts rolling in. That money is gone. What's his angle?
- Haze

- It couldn't be as simple as figuring he had more than enough for himself, so he thought he'd use the rest to do something good, could it?
- Old Crow

- Yeah, that's the sort of thing that's so simple that it never actually happens in the real world. So no, it couldn't.
- Haze

- A few things. While Pineyard can't pocket profits, you can bet that once the university is self-sustainable, he'll be collecting some income from it, probably in the six figures. Which is nice, though of course if he makes 250,000 nuyen per year, it would still take him four thousand years to recoup one billion nuyen. So yes, in that respect he would have been better off just holding on to his money. But if BTI fulfills his vision, Pineyard could play a huge role in shaping the future.

  Consider this: Universities were critical in the development of the Internet, which became the Matrix. A University of Manchester researcher developed the critical components of oral contraceptives. The Dumas Test to discern the existence of magical abilities in individuals was developed at a university. And that's just a small sample of how universities have launched efforts that affected wide swathes of society. Universities have the chance to change the world without the slavish devotion to profits that corps face. Whatever else we know about Pineyard, he clearly gets off on science. Where better to do exactly the kind of work he wants than in a university of his creation? He's not just funding an education for students—he's developing a location that will provide the time and equipment to do the research of his dreams, surrounded by a gifted team of researchers and faculty. How is this a mysterious goal?
- Beaker

- Not all of us are nerds.
- Kane

For the first few years, BTI flew under the radar, mainly because it wasn't asking much of anything from anyone. They recruited a bunch of students (only to reject most of them—gotta get your reputation for selectivity started as soon as possible) and hired some up-and-coming teachers and researchers, but those sorts of efforts don't make many waves in the larger world. Now,

though, the first group of students is entering their senior year, so placement work is moving ahead in earnest. A few corps have already had their eye on the university, especially Renraku, who is always looking for more ways to establish technological capacity in the CAS.

- Ares has been playing close attention as well. Things have been very unpleasant for them at the home office in Detroit, so they've been looking at other places where they can build up power. If BTI can live up to Pineyard's hype, Ares (or any other corp that partners with the university) has the chance to get on the ground floor of a brand-new pipeline of top tech talent. Ares could use a boost of that nature. Or any nature.
- Dr. Spin

All of this is to set up this central point: There is a trog-friendly university in the CAS looking to be a major player in tech education. Everything and anything is available in ork and troll size—dorm rooms, lab equipment, intra-campus transportation, and so on. The university doesn't just accept trogs; it welcomes them. If you don't know the difference, you're not a trog.

It's too early to tell if BTI will be a major player for a long time or if it will come to nothing, wasting a ton of Pineyard's money for no long-term gain. The amount Pineyard is investing, though, shows he's not going to let it go easily. So if you're a trog who thinks they have the right skills, find an application and enjoy connecting to an institution looking for someone just like you.

- Pineyard has scored some significant victories, especially when it comes to pilfering NeoNET staff. Esmeralda Colon, former VP of electronic engineering at Celedyr's Albuquerque facility, now teaches at BTI, as does former Transys-Neuronet biotechnician Vijay Pawar. Having a Technocrat government in charge of the CAS doesn't hurt, and Pineyard is making some significant inroads with government officials. I don't want to make any definitive statements about where BTI will end up in the long term, but I suspect outside funding will jump up in the next few years, so it will be a force worth watching. Then we'll see what the competition wants to do about it.
- Beaker

ARES

TROG HEROES

A CALL TO ARMS

POSTED BY: KAR'AK D'RAKAN'DA

TRANSLATED FROM OR'ZET 03-19-79

Brothers and sisters of the tusk, hear my call. They think we are their lessers. They think we are their servants. They think we are dumb.

We are none of these. We are mighty. We are many. We are the future.

A future where we come together as one. Where orks and trolls stand as a united force against the rampant oppression of this world. We stand together, and we stand with honor.

We will not let their hatred drive us to hatred. They expect violence from us, but our violence will not be fist and blade, our violence will be voice and resistance.

Let them call you TROG! It is not a degradation of our people, but of theirs.

Be a trog with honor.

Join the Trog Nation!

It's time to talk up some of our brothers and sisters that are doing good for our name. I'll do it pseudo-dossier style, with some basics covered up top so you know where to find them and who they are. Then I'll talk candidly.

SUZIE BLUE

- **Metatype:** Troll
- **Appearance:** Blue hair, 2.7m, swept-back horns, blue lips, chalky skin
- **Location:** Chicago, CZ, mobile radio van

If you are an ork or a troll in Chicago, you know who Suzie Blue is. If you're an ork or a troll running the shadows in Chicago, you need to actually know her. She's the best pipeline in the city for work that benefits us as a people.

Every day, orks and trolls (and probably a few others) tune in to 102.2 FM (yup, actual over-the-air broadcast) to hear *Suzie Blue on the Two Point Two!* She records these for broadcasting (and subsequent Matrixcasting) so that she is not actually on the spot when the broadcasts are sent out. She does not want someone who can track a signal being able to find her. Her show focuses on promoting our people as more than just tusks and muscle. She brings in scientists, journalists, doctors, and all sorts of other professionals to interview on the show. It's a crazy set up, and also the reason she keeps a good stable of runners, because her operations need to stay secret. Contact, transport, and protection of the trog professionals she interviews is all done by shadow pros.

Her show focuses on coming together as a people, both orks and trolls, understanding that the rest of metahumanity will never accept the beings so recently thought of as monsters any time in the near future. She talks about a future for the children where the world has had time to see orks and trolls as a constructive part of society, even if they are acting within societies separate from the mainstream.

This means not just bringing successful professional trogs on the air for interviews, but convincing those successful professionals to join up as part of her cause. This currently means moving to the wreckage of a once-proud city currently fighting between the forces of the megacorporations and independence. Suzie sees Chicago, and several other "fallen" cities, as opportunities for trolls and orks to create communities and a society of their own, not unlike the elves in the Tírs.

When it comes to building communities in Chicago, she has found that developing a functional economy is the hardest part. Most areas

currently rely heavily on scavenging tech and goods that are sometimes decades old. The rest of their survival comes through a self-sufficiency rarely seen in the Sixth World, mostly due to solid leadership and their introverted focus.

- Blue has taken several successful runners off the streets of Chicago to be part of these communities, filling a role besides muscle. She's pulling a lot of the trog brains and voices off the shadowmarket in order to run these niche communities. In the Chicago area, this is not helping the rep of ork and troll shadowrunners, because the ones she doesn't select are often those with seriously violent tendencies. Hopefully her long game will bring benefits to overcome this short-term perception issue.
- Butch

- She pulls several of those violent ones into her communities as well—she just utilizes their skills in a different manner. Chicago's CZ may be "open," but that only means they aren't worried about the bugs (which is stupid, IMHO, but whatever). It's still a violence-filled cesspool, controlled by the block. Warlords in Chicago don't care if you're forming a nicer ork-and-troll community, they care that you have resources they want. Or that you're housing people they want dead.
- Bull

Suzie talks a lot about the Black Forest Troll Kingdom, the Seattle Underground, the Cascade Orks in Salish-Shidhe, Sweetwater Creek down in Atlanta, and the tribes around Lagos. With all of them, she uses a kind of reverence people tend to employ when discussing holy cities. She sees their successes (and the recent "failure" in Seattle, as she sees it) as a guiding path for other trog societies. Word on the street is that while she talks about them like they are the ultimate example of troll and ork independence, she has never been outside the Chicago sprawl, so she's relying entirely on what others tell her and what she learns over the Matrix.

- Which can actually be quite a lot. You can walk the virtual streets of almost any sprawl, hang out in a wide variety of clubs, and engage in locals from across the globe. Just because she hasn't been there doesn't mean she doesn't know.
- Bull

- I dunno. I mean, research is great and all, but you never learn a place so well as when you're walking its actual streets, and mixing it up with the people who may not be in VR. And if you're missing some part of a place's reality, then you're missing some information.
- /dev/ girl

- The old guy went new school, and the kid went old school. Dig it.
- Sounder

- Quite a few Chicago corporate Mr. Johnsons are looking for Blue. She's got too much sway over the local trogs, and they don't like their "brute workers" getting ideas that they could have some better life elsewhere.
- 2XL

- Most of those jobs go to racist thugs who have no chance of getting into the communities that protect Suzie. When the job manages to get into the hands of runners more competent and racially diverse, Suzie tends to find out and turns their metatype identity against them.
- Mihoshi Oni

- Word has it that Blue is looking for a solid team she can trust to help her visit a few of those other trog hotspots, but it's been tough. The corps can always seem to get someone to roll, so Suzie needs a total trust crew. And they can't be all trogs, or it would blow her cover.
- 0kCE0

BULK DEAL

- **Metatype:** Unknown (ork suspected)
- **Appearance:** Bulky cartoonish ork in a tuxedo
- **Location:** Matrix (worldwide)

Well known as a Johnson who can always get you skilled orks and trolls on your job, this Matrix mystery is definitely someone to turn to if you want brains and skills attached to your muscle. Bulk Deal operates entirely from the Matrix, setting up meetings in some seriously secured hosts in order to demonstrate his talent and/or connections.

The key to BD's success is putting the right trogs in the right jobs and supporting their development in non-traditional roles. His stable of runners includes everything a corp exec may need to accomplish any bit of no-goodery that might improve their bottom line. That same stable often gets side-jobs—not milk runs, but usually low-threat ops where they can practice their skills and cross-train with other local talent. The jobs never double up on training, so each op will only have one doubled-up slot. That slot is always in a key position: double faces for a negotiation or con, double muscle for a go-hard job, double hackers for a Matrix op, that sort of thing.

- Careful with BD impersonators. He/she has such a solid rep, plenty of others jump on the bandwagon. Sometimes for good, but more often they're looking to either insert a mole or send a group of trogs on a suicide run.
- Goat Foot

BD is a huge proponent of a worldwide community and culture for trolls and orks. The idea is that with the Matrix connecting everyone, there is no reason to geographically relocate in order to build a new, trog-centric culture. Everyone just needs to log on and start communicating. He donates a lot of free commlinks and trodes to orks and trolls around the world, often hiring runners to make sure that the wares get to their intended targets rather than into the hands of local warlords, black marketeers, or fences looking to make a buck.

- While BD is a great resource for work and an excellent Mr. Johnson to know, understanding metahuman nature and the Matrix is not his strong suit. The Matrix doesn't do a good job of positive communication. Maybe hackers do a decent job of getting others to listen (after they realize they are talking smack to someone who can melt their ware), but most others use the anonymity of the Matrix as a way to spout garbage and vitriol without repercussion.
- Glitch

- BD grew up in the commlink-hacker Matrix. There was a little more respect then.
- Netcat

- Don't start reminiscing about the good-old days, when people were polite and respectful, gosh darn it! That's usually just hazy memory. There wasn't a ton more respect back then.
- Slamm-0!

Now for some speculation. Most believe Bulk Deal is an ork, male, about forty years old, and more than likely from one of the English-speaking

North American nations based on his slang usage, communication patterns, and general attitude. His operational location is what interests more people, and that's what we've spent more time looking into. Best we have is that we have nothing. He's skilled at hiding his tracks, and from what I've gathered, he rarely works from a single location for longer than a few weeks, usually moving shortly before or after the completion of a contract. He's never been tracked to areas near his contracts, as he uses intermediaries for all aspects of the physical exchanges. Most of the jobs he hires for are purely data driven, along with extractions and thefts where the intent is the removal of materials, not for alternate delivery but for destruction or personal gain for the runner team.

- Another perk of the work: Sometimes you get to keep the goods. Bulk Deal has one of the most solid reps as any Mr. Johnson in the shadows, but the rep comes with a complete absence of personal knowledge about the guy.
- Slamm-0!

SMEDLEY PEMBRENTON III

- **Metatype:** Troll
- **Appearance:** Grey/Black hair, 2.65m, muscular, swept back single left horn, right horn broken, British accent (London, most likely), wears a monocle, frequently smokes cigars
- **Location:** Boston, currently NEMAQZ

Thanks to a few more small data dumps from our Boston connection, AJ, we've managed to learn more about the efforts going on behind the wall. Smedley is at the heart of a lot of the efforts to reopen the QZ from the inside.

His history goes back to the shadows well before the Boston incident when Smedley was a Watcher for the Big D. He made a lot of connections in those days that have proved helpful in surviving the lockdown, and quite a few of those connections have no problem working to keep in contact so they know what the hell is going on behind that wall.

From everything we've received, it doesn't look like Pembrenton is digging into the source of the incident anymore. Rather, he is looking to help keep the survivors surviving and potentially find a way to bring down the wall. His current influence is extremely limited, but it's the example that he's setting that makes him a troll to be respected and admired. Within the Boston QZ, he is thought of as a universal peacemaker. He works with everyone, regardless of their background, metatype, or preferred corporate affiliations. He finds a way for everyone he works with to get along, or at least get to work.

- With NeoNET taking the hit for this, what's the long-term plan for Boston? They've tossed the dragon under the bus and the Monads are muddling the CFD portion, but the money pouring into the pockets of those who have a voice in this whole thing makes me think it never will get resolved. Do we have better info on what has gone down inside since '76?
- Sounder

- Data's building, but we're waiting on a dump for some dots to connect. Unfounded speculation is not the name of the game here. For once.
- Glitch

In connection to Pembrenton on the inside, the Draco Foundation has been increasingly interested in work around the NEMAQZ. The number of runners who have been dumped into the lockdown by the DF alone is in the hundreds. They bring in data, meet up with Pembrenton, and work on plans for increasing communication and decreasing captivity. A few have made it out—far fewer than those who claim to, though why anyone would lie about escaping from a viral outbreak quarantine is beyond me. Most of those who've slipped the wall have done so with the help of Pembrenton and the DF.

- I have it on good authority that at least two runner teams have been sent in to extract Pembrenton from the QZ, but he refuses to leave. I don't have reports as to why he refused or how the refusals went down, but the DF could change the rules for the operation soon and make the extraction of this valuable asset involuntary, rather than the polite request it has been thus far.
- Fianchetto

GARY GRAY

- **Metatype:** Troll
- **Appearance:** 2.67m; gray hair, sculpted horns
- **Location:** Sacramento, CFS

There isn't a trog on North America that hasn't heard of the former VP candidate and current CEO

of Sierra, Inc. Gray is one of the earliest and most well-known troll success stories. Haters say he rode on the coat tails of a dwarf, but Gray would never have even been in the running to stand by Vogel's side if he hadn't demonstrated his grit, determination, and suave political acumen before the '57 elections.

Right out in the open and for everyone to see, Gray has a very simple yet powerful agenda. He wants to see more trolls and orks in politics, taking a stand in the public eye. The contrast, and what he's fighting against, is the current culture of trogs working themselves to death in low-end jobs or dying on the streets or in the shadows. He operates outreach offices that help ork- and troll-heavy communities with work programs, educational assistance, and the development of rec centers where young trolls and orks can go and not feel persecuted for being different.

- I remember going to the gym when I was younger and having all of the smaller metas get pissed at me because I used so many of the weights. I had imagined others would cheer for me while I added plate after plate in an amazing display of strength, but instead I got snide comments and glares. I don't care if it was jealousy, fear of something different, or if I really was being inconsiderate, I just like the idea of young trogs having somewhere to go where being able to bench press a Hyundai isn't looked down on.
- 2XL

We get the occasional piece of work from trying to create a world where we don't have to work that way, but I also include Gray here because of the work he pushes into the shadows against hate groups. The money trail usually stops at a related front company, but Sierra, Inc. and ultimately Gary Gray, puts a lot of effort into not only cleaning up the literal environment but also cleaning up the social environment. Humanis, Alamos, the Paladin medical group, and even hyper-militant branches of the Son of Sauron, alongside pollution-spewing corps, are all targets for operations contracted by Gray in order to improve the atmosphere of the world we live in for orks and trolls in all walks of life.

While we look up to Gray and he continues to be a positive face of our kind, in order to continue operations of this nature he needs others to take to the shadows and act on his behalf. His usual Mr. Johnsons are often human, in order to further muddy the link to him and preserve his anonymity, but the number of ork Johnsons is growing as the population of orks increases. The problem they still face is the fact that most people don't know how much they are growing, because much of the ork population in the world is SINless and corporate media doesn't advertise their growth. Expect any work being contracted for Gray's purposes to be fronted by someone of the blandest nature in whatever area you're working. Humans are the default, but it will probably be an elf in the Tír, a troll or ork in the Schwarzwald, and a Native in NAN lands.

As for what it is he hires runners to do, it runs the spectrum. Sabotaging hate groups is common, but that work usually calls for a less-violent team, and one that lacks metahumans in public roles. The team's rigger or hacker might be a meta, but the face and the muscle are almost always human if they're going to make headway against these groups. Getting into a hate group as one of those who is hated is tough, and Gray refuses to put orks or trolls in potentially violent roles that may be seen by the public or even the hate group themselves. Gray knows that somehow minds will need to be changed, and a head full of memories of trog violence is going to make that job all the more difficult.

- Blackmail jobs come through a lot. Ops to get dirt on meta-haters and people who are funneling money to those groups while keeping themselves hidden are fairly common. Some of these jobs use the shadows as a stepping stone to move info from the darkness to the light.
- Sounder

- Pretty poetic for a sub skipper.
- 2XL

KATYANA BURGESHKOVA; KAT BERG

- **Metatype:** Ork
- **Appearance:** Various hair colors; 1.98m; athletic build; mole on right cheek, tusk carvings (love and trust kanji)
- **Location:** Los Angeles, PCC

The beautiful Kat Berg—best known for her role as the title character, Nikki Blackstone, on *Blackstone*—is an actress, Mr. Johnson, and activist in the LA

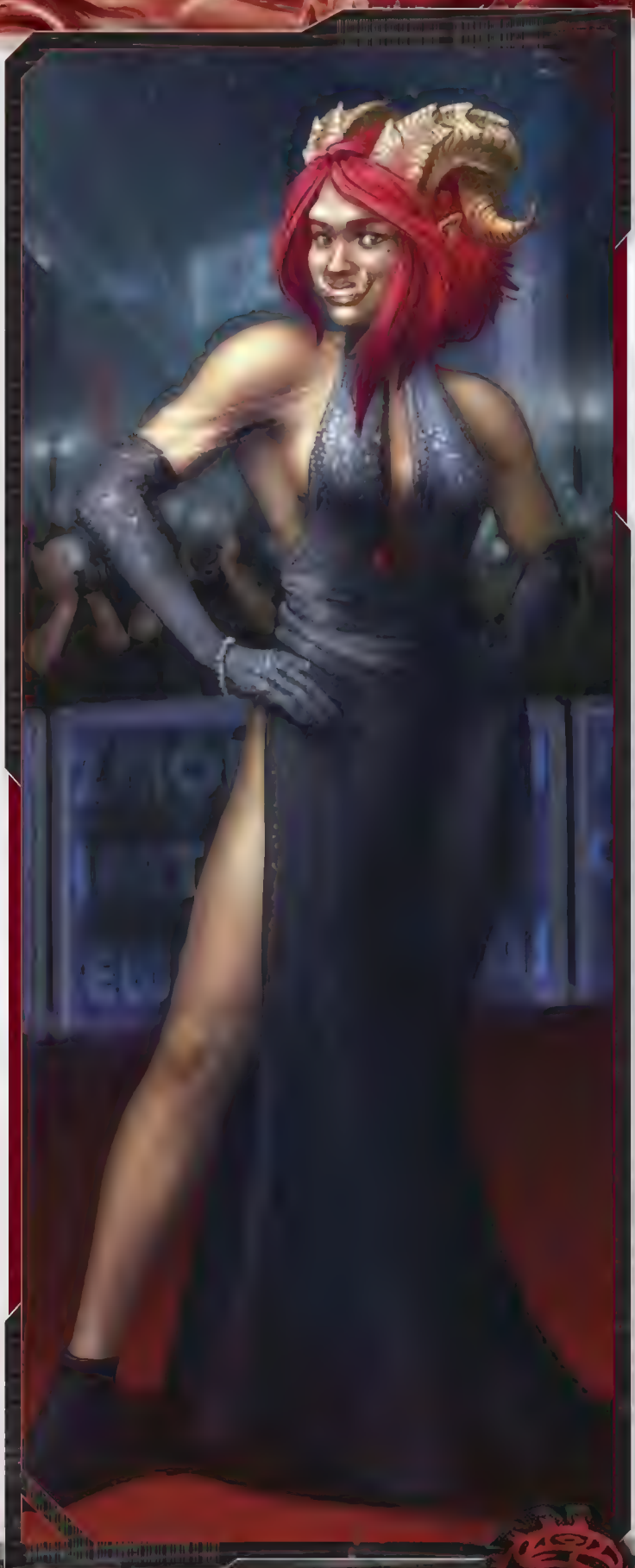
area. Her place on one of the most cross-culturally successful trid shows has gained her worldwide fame as well as acceptance among groups that would not normally hold an ork in such high regard. The fact that she uses her show as a public arena for current social and political issues and handles them in a very professional manner keeps her audiences coming back for more and even sways their views on potentially divisive topics.

- Berg isn't all natural, and I'm not talking about the normal starlet augmentations. Kat has had work done on her jaw to allow her to speak in a clearer more "publicly digestible" manner. Orks and trolls often lose a lot of social standing from the way they talk, thanks to their tusks making it harder for them to form certain mouth and lip sounds. Kat had some work done that cleared up that issue without changing how she looks.
- Butch

Though her viewership is worldwide, her efforts for change are focused more locally. She works hard to improve the lives of orks and trolls in SoCal and has been especially successful with lessening the negative cultural influence of the Saito era and making post-Saito SoCal a place where metahumanity can flourish. The SoCal chapter of Mothers of Metahumans (MOM) is the second largest in the world, behind only Seattle. Her place as the face of MOM has drawn supporters from all walks of life, including former spokesman for the Humanis Policlub, Gabriel West. West acted as the voice for the HP in NorCal and came to Berg's side after an episode of *Blackstone* depicted him as a genuinely good guy trapped in the politics of his upbringing.

- That was a run gone right. Berg hired a team to dig into West's past and then used what they found to generate a character on Blackstone. After the episode aired, Kat reached out to West quietly and found him willing to change his position with the promise of some clandestine security. The hacker who worked with the team even said that the pay for the job was part of the episode budget for *Blackstone*. They even made it into the episode credits as consultants.
- Sunshine

Though Berg has a strong and exceedingly positive, public image, she has a dark side. While her MOM branch is number two in the world, her Sons of Sauron crew is the largest. The Sons of Sauron is a meta policlub that has some



parallels to Humanis in their extremist views and actions. They also have a few smaller sub-sects, the Hand of Sauron and the Eye of Sauron, that function even more militantly than their politically oriented parent group. Berg is a big reason for this and a primary source of contracts benefitting these organizations. And she doesn't even hide her identity beyond calling herself Mr. Johnson. This isn't out of some sense of invulnerability or some need to get caught and live the risky life, but because her look—including her mole and carved tusks—has become such an LA trend, she blends in enough in most places that a simple, "No, but I just love her show!" will get her past anyone questioning her identity (except maybe the most die-hard fans, but they do not often work the shadows). The jobs that she contracts for the sub-sects are filled with espionage, sabotage, leg-breaking, collections, data steals, and even wetwork.

- As a Johnson, Berg has a seriously dark reputation. Obviously not the double-cross type or she couldn't keep working, but she expects results to come back her way. She's a hard negotiator and puts it out there up front that if you fail to meet her expectations of completion, she will dock your payment. Since her rep is solid in town, it's usually not an issue, but often enough out-of-town help is brought in that doesn't know her.They learn the hard way.
- Sunshine

- Some joker named Skullcrusher came down from Seattle to work for Berg. He signed on for a quiet op, minimal death, limited exposure, and ended up performing his namesake move on somebody's P2.0 feed. Berg docked him, and he wasn't happy. He beat her and left her hospitalized for two weeks while putting two of her bodyguards in the morgue and costing the three other runners he was working with a DocWagon resuscitation. Within hours, well before Berg came out of her first surgery, there were contracts on him. The ork and troll community just went bananas.
- Fianchetto

- Apparently not enough of them did. He's still at large and has made a mess of several individuals looking to collect.
- Clockwork

She isn't completely independent. Her work contract is with Horizon's Pathfinder Multimedia, and they occasionally crack down on her off-script activities. Whether it's their or her choice, she avoids establishing any connections between MOM and Horizon/Pathfinder. Events are always booked outside Horizon's subsidiaries when they involve her other interests, even though that may mean corp scrip leaving the corp.

- Horizon has played nice while it didn't hurt their bottom line, but her hospitalization cost them shooting time and production delays. Expect them to crack down a little harder, possibly even tapping the shadow community to help keep her in line.
- Sunshine

- "In line" is the perfect term. I know a Johnson down SoCal way who normally fronts for Horizon, and he's sitting on a contract to disrupt any clandestine meetings being held by Kat Berg. He said the contract isn't fully active but held for immediate fulfillment should the need arise. He also said that Ms. Johnson-Berg was tapped for the same contract so that she knows it's hovering over her head.
- Kat o' NineTales

DR. WILCOX GRAHAM

- **Metatype:** Troll
- **Appearance:** Grey/White hair; 2.57m; curled horns; wire-rimmed spectacles (loaded with software); modest dress style
- **Location:** London, UK

Most runners haven't heard of Graham before right now, because most runners don't spend their time searching the darkest corners of the Matrix for well-formulated and supported scientific work on the biology of the ingentis and robustus subspecies. Seems super boring, but Graham is producing science papers backed by proper studies that would destroy many of the modern perceptions of trolls and orks. That is exactly why we trogs need to know him and help him keep working so that he can get his work into the public arena.

Based out of the British Isles but a frequent world traveler, Graham has travelled the globe studying various populations of orks and trolls in order to disprove much of the mythos surrounding these subspecies that was created through biased science and cultural rhetoric in the earliest days of UGE and the subsequent years of cultural oppression and metatype hate-mongering. His studies are not just limited to first-world nations like the UCAS and the Black

Forest Troll Kingdom, but also to the growing African tribes in the Congo and Nigeria, the South American favela dwellers, the outcast oni of Asia, the horsemen of Central Asia, and orks and trolls living in and among all the metatypes of the world across the globe. His extensive travel and research are made possible by those of us in the shadows who support his cause, but his work is often hindered by "those who fear the light of science will destroy the dim shadows of ignorance." Those were his exact words, and while they sound hokey, it is his belief that studying reality and learning truths instead of proliferating hate and unfounded opinions will bring the metahumans of the world together and improve their relationships.

While he doesn't contract his own jobs (he's far too introverted to be Mr. Johnson), he goes on almost every fact-finding mission he contracts. There is the occasional bit of data stealing and megacorporate espionage that he leaves to the professionals, but when he needs to head out into the field and talk to the people, observe unobstructed behavior, or create situations to study reactions and biochemical interactions, he's right there. For some teams, this is a deal breaker. They won't take civilians or non-contracted members because of the risk of double-cross, additional need for security on them, or whatever other reason they generate. Most of the time Graham informs the contracting fixer or Mr. Johnson of this requirement to avoid the lost time, but some jobs are put together in new cities with unknown assets. Be warned—if Graham taps your team, you may need to take him with. The good news is, he's been doing this awhile and has learned when to keep his head down. The bad news is, he's got more curiosity than a bag of cats, and it sometimes gets the better of him. He also tends to ask any and all orks and trolls on the team to participate in his study, which involves a lengthy question-and-answer session filled with all sorts of topics that most runners would rather not address. Then he asks them to wear trodes and a biomonitor for the duration of the run.

- Some of the jobs he's contracted were purely for research. The teams were entirely composed of trolls and orks, and he takes notes on everything from whether or not they agreed to the offered contract terms to how the team conducted itself throughout the run, both in terms of inter-team dynamics and how they dealt with outsiders. His work has both biological and social elements. I've read several of his studies and find his views go against the grain of common beliefs, but they are statistically accurate and match what I get when I perform similar studies.
- Butch

Graham's biggest hurdle is the fact that he knows the world we live in is not controlled by intellect but by the bottom line. Whatever makes it easiest to keep the workers and average joes in line is what the powers of the world will push. A few corps have slightly different mindsets, but they still aren't there for enlightenment. Horizon gives their people a sense of free will, but really they're just all feeding into each other's ignorance, fears, and desire for self-indulgence. As things currently stand, Graham has had the most success with Evo, but their recent troubles have caused them to circle the wagons and they aren't in a place to go introducing new elements to their education, even if they are one of the main pools of corporate citizens that Graham used. For now he needs to keep doing his work, and in order to do that he needs the occasional support team, a bodyguard every once in a while when threats get too close to home, and a lot of subjects to increase the depth of his pool of knowledge.

- Just so some of you can get a general idea of some of the controversial ideas (that are scientifically supported) being put forth by Graham, I offer you three wonderful bits that might just twist up your vision of the world. 1) Troll life spans are longer than originally estimated. Like *way* longer. Cultural and environmental factors have been the primary reason for previously incorrect data, but the short lifespan concept is deeply entrenched, making it hard to change. 2) Ork average lifespan is drastically affected by environmental living conditions and societal pressures. The short lifespan that orks are reported to have is a direct result of increased stress hormone release and exposure to harmful environmental substances, including air and water pollution. The tribes of Central Asia, well distanced from standard pollutant-producing vehicles and facilities, are showing dramatically increased life spans. They are staying healthy and fit nearing sixty years of age, rather than the forty we see in urban environments. 3)The global ork population is rapidly approaching that of humans. Based on growth patterns, orks could be the dominant metatype by the turn of the century.
- Butch

- Orks of the world, unite!
- Slamm-0!

- There are plenty of places in the world where they are trying, but with money as the primary source of power in our modern world and orks controlling only about 0.8 percent of the world's financial wealth, it's difficult to rise up, or even to just step away and start your own place. Even if all the orks of the world were to decide they wanted to live together as an ork nation, and they settled on living in a less-than-hospitable geographical location because it was given to them free, they still lack connections and infrastructure to develop as a nation.
- 0rkCE0

- But there are several people we have listed here who are trying to help that along. And we can get Gary Cline. Horizon can be our megacorp. Evo probably wouldn't shy away either.
- Snopes

- Take a breath, re-read the huge amount of unsupported optimism in that post, then debunk yourself.
- Clockwork

ORXANNE

- **Metatype:** Ork
- **Appearance:** Black hair shoulder length; 1.79m; athletic build
- **Location:** Los Angeles, PCC; global (tour cities)

Rigger X talked about her back in '73 with the *Attitude* drop, so I won't rehash much of that here. Over the last half-decade her status as a hero of her people has only grown. What started as a few contracts here and there for runners to work security for her expanded gradually into more proactive operations as she worked to protect and build Wejoto Records, acquire new unsigned talent, and push back against a myriad of cultural and corporate enemies. The stage for her causes has grown, and so have her aims in developing more equitable laws for orks and trolls.

From behind the big desk at Wejoto she managed to develop a worldwide network of connections, and while ork and troll cultures vary around the world, a few unifying principles were always present. Respect is earned. Acceptance by the world is not expected. Everywhere she reached felt the same way. They earned respect, and not simply by brute force, but by a code that sometimes involved violence but the violence was always controlled. They didn't feel they needed the world to accept them as something special, they just needed to do what they do, again following a code of honor that sometimes involved violence.

But the desk wasn't good enough. Too often jobs fell into hands that weren't strong enough to bear the weight of ork honor or didn't understand what was expected when the code was broken. Orxanne felt these things needed to be handled personally. She set up a world tour but set dates only two months out. Preparing cities and arenas for her arrival became a big event as she announced her schedule one week at a time, then worked in front of and behind the scenes to plan jobs for the cities she was heading to. When a problem arises, Orxanne has been known to do short-notice shows at small venues, helping her stay in touch with her people. Every one of these involves contracting shadow work while also hiring runners to act as security for her.

She's survived more attempts on her life than most third-world dictators, but she keeps coming back for more. She truly believes in a unified world of orks and trolls and as she connects trogs from around the world using music with a meaning. She gets closer and closer to truly earning the title her enemies slap on her with distaste but she revels in: "Queen Slitch of the Trogs."

- As much as this looks like she's forming some global ork community, it's barely holding itself together against the media onslaught by the corps. We can make it sound like she's rallying the trogs of the world, but most places run news about "disruptions and violence" caused by her concerts. The media corps love orxploitation, but they paint Wejoto as some dark goblin-cult music label to most of their citizens.
- Sounder

- Which isn't a problem. Concert security turns away dozens of corporate security details at their concerts who are there following citizens who have left corporate property without proper authorization. They listen to her artists by accessing the public grid (ewww), and more often than not, the violence at these concerts comes from Humanis goons. KSAF has done dozens of live feeds from Wejoto shows only to reveal that those who cast the first stones—along with the second, third, fourth, and so on—all have smooth skin and tuskless jaws.
- Snopes

KING ALFONSO XIII OF SPAIN

- **Metatype:** Ogre
- **Appearance:** Brown hair, 2.2m, trim goatee, regal bearing
- **Location:** Madrid, Spain

King Alfonso XIII was the firstborn son of former King Felipe VI, born as an ogre in 2022 at the beginning of Goblinization. His metaracial difference was seen as a deformity, a sin, and a black mark on the soul of the Bourbon line. The royal couple wasn't eager to kill him in the way that so many others across the world did were at the time. Instead, they gave him to the Duque of Alba to raise as his own son, concealing the child's true heritage. A few years later, Alfonso's younger, human brother Juan Carlos was born and raised as the heir apparent to the Spanish throne.

Alfonso grew up shrouded in secrecy, because even while he was officially part of the Spanish aristocracy, he was still an ogre in a country that remains notorious for its racism even today. He was sent to boarding schools in Greece and ultimately to the United States following the Crash of '29 and the beginning of the Euro Wars. His reclusive nature was born out of necessity, and reinforced through a lifetime of fear and humiliation at being unwanted. Alfonso spent almost his entire life believing that he was the child of the Duque of Alba, aristocracy but not royalty. Having spent the entirety of the Euro Wars in American boarding schools, Alfonso also missed the most intense fires of racial, religious, and cultural hatred and bigotry that burned at home. Instead, he experienced the fear and hatred that burned within the U.S. and later UCAS. He also experienced the power of metahumans to fight back. He saw the UCAS pass the civil-rights amendment that codified into the Constitution the principles that metahumans are people, equal to humans, with all the rights privileges of humans. He was also exposed to stories of metahuman resistance in all its forms. He grew up among other metahuman scions—not entirely desired, but still expected to uphold their heritage and potential as adults nonetheless. Eventually, Alfonso returned to Europe and attended school in Spain and England before returning to Spain for good. Following the death of King Felipe VI on May 5, 2063, Alfonso was alerted to the fact that he was, in fact, the firstborn son of King Felipe VI and therefore the rightful heir to the Spanish throne.

- There's no evidence that Alfonso was finally told the truth by his adopted father or by anyone within the royal court who would have been privy to this information. That leaves certain figures within the secret service, which is odd since Spain's spies were notorious hardliners even within the government. The reality is that it didn't appear to benefit anyone to raise this at the time because Spain was already on the threshold of exploding racial violence even before Alfonso made his claim. Once Juan Carlos rescinded his claim and King Alfonso was crowned, things only grew worse. Crash 2.0 turned out to be the best thing that could've happened to Spain.
- Fianchetto

For ten weeks, everyone within and with an interest in Spain took sides with either Alfonso or Juan Carlos. Then Juan Carlos withdrew his claim in late July. Pope John XXV crowned him King Alfonso XIII on January 1, 2064. Once Prince Juan Carlos rescinded his claim, the shadows and the public face of Spanish society became even more fraught with danger than they had been before or during the crisis. One of the most racist nation-states in the world was about to have a metahuman as its head of state.

This result came in no small part through a confluence of internal machinations within the Spanish government, the Spanish Church and the Vatican, and several NEEC megacorporations-most notably, Aztechnology. One surprise player in all of this was Cross Applied Technologies. The shockwaves from Nachtmeister's death at Lofwyr's talons dragged the corp into the European shadows even more deeply than it ever wanted, and for the first and last time, CATCo and Ares found common ground in the desire to prevent Spain fracturing into civil war. There was overt peace, even though figures agitated in the shadows and the political and social discourse held to a failsafe point just short of either side calling for violence.

- Some of the Seraphim that "volunteered" to assist as his bodyguards and counsel still remain within the court.
- Thorn

On November 2, 2064, Lofwyr shut down the European Matrix in response to the fallout from the combination of Winternight's terrorist attacks and chaos in the Matrix leading to Crash

2.0. Spain's Matrix went entirely offline. This was a shock—Spain hasn't always been the most advanced nation-state in the world, but it is one of the larger and more interconnected ones. The fear and chaos erupted into violence, and rumors fueled by longstanding hatred and suspicion served as pretexts for violence, just as it did in other parts of the world. King Alfonso XIII rose to the occasion and called for calm, and then he claimed emergency powers. This wasn't a government or community crisis, it was a global crisis, and Spain needed to stand united or else it would cease to exist. There was no reason to expect the military or the police would follow his orders as the head of government, as the Spanish monarchy had been a figurehead for eighty-nine years at this point. Neither Alfonso's grandfather nor father had claimed total power during any of the crises they oversaw. The king's point was that their failure to do so was what had landed Spain in such a crisis, putting them in the precarious position of being at the mercy of the NEEC's and megacorps' whims to the point that Lofwyr could shut down their grid from Essen.

What was amazing is that the military and the police followed him. Perhaps it was the Church that led them to fall in line—the Church that had recently seen Cardinal Estrellas pass away, replaced by the far more liberal Cardinal Godó of Barcelona. Godó also represented a silent plurality that most people—especially outsiders—had overlooked during these frictions: the Catalonian people themselves. The region is the backbone of the economy, and yet it had allowed the rest of Spain to tear itself apart for decades until the moment came, and the powers that be sided with the king. The corporations took that as a sign and fell in line, supporting what they thought would be a technocrat who, while left-leaning, knew how they could make or break the nation.

Once the Matrix was restored, King Alfonso rescinded his edict and claim to unilateral authority, but he also demanded a full accounting for the Spanish people to face the history and potential consequences of long-standing prejudices and conflicts that were tearing apart the country.

SPANISH IDENTITY

Spaniards lost control of all their final AA-rated megacorporation when Johnny Spinrad completed purchase of Sol Media. Meridional's merger with Renault-Fiat shifted controlled to the French majority. Banco Español is controlled by the Frankfurt Bank Association and the Vatican—a shift that also had the effect of neutering the right-wing in Spain, especially the Church, when Rome used this as leverage to promote the late Pope John XXV's liberal clergy over Estrellas' more racist and/or conservative allies. Meanwhile, it has been a knife in the gut for Spain and King Alfonso as the head of state to see the NAN and indigenous blocs in Latin America become economically and politically aggressive in their hostility towards Spain for its role in the conquest of the Americas. In the end, the near-collapse of Banco Español has placed Spain's most conservative elements in a precarious position because they were the greatest victims of the crash. The Spanish cardinals' decades of constant friction against the Vatican was tempered by the reality that Rome was now responsible for keeping the lights on and properties intact.

- In theory, Gaeatronics and Spain would be ideally situated to make the most of the former's solar and wind systems, working to get them placed across Spain and into northern African areas where Spain has considerable leverage, specifically Morocco. However, Gaeatronics simply refuses to make the deal. Instead, the Spanish have been the *fortunate* beneficiaries of discounted Shiawase atomic systems.

  The reality is that whatever economic and political benefits Gaeatronics could accrue are outweighed by the fact that the people in charge, along with a vocal minority within the STC, just want Spain and Portugal to not be.
- Ecotope

The relationship with Aztechnology is straining because King Alfonso has been increasingly vocal about the Big A's outright hostility toward and oppression of Roman Catholics and other Christians within Aztlan, occupied territories, and Aztechnology-controlled areas. It hasn't helped that Aztechnology's adoption of Neo-Nahuatl and other shifts within the corporation has begun to unravel the traditional connection between Spain and Latin America. King Alfonso is a devout Roman Catholic, but due to his time in North America, he became a devout believer in left-wing liberation theology and has expressed open and frank support of the liberal Pope John XXV before his passing, and the Awakened Pope Sixtus VI who succeeded him.

There are questions, though, about how much energy Alfonso has to bring to this fight, because

to be honest, the king and the Spanish people are exhausted. The conflict over King Alfonso being an ogre, the deepening schisms between Catholics and non-Catholics with everyone else, and the work to strive to grow in a Europe that sometimes wants to ignore you is tiring. The truth and reconciliation process has continued, as every time it seems to wind up some new crisis occurs to test the mettle of the people. It is partly due to this stress, but also in part to his own faith, that King Alfonso XIII has shaped his monarchy to reflect that of King Alfonso X's reign. Alfonso the Learned presided over an historic period of tolerance and openness even in the midst of the *Reconquista* against the Moors in Granada. He has made it clear that he wants Spain to be known for openness equal to that of Castille in Alfonso X's day (indeed, Castilian became the official tongue of Castille, and later Spain, due to King Alfonso X)—coexistence of all religions, especially between Christianity and Islam, all races, the Awakened, the Emerged, even Metasapients and synthetic intelligence beings. There is progress in this work, but it can be wearying.

One thing that King Alfonso hasn't supported is regional autonomy. The Catalonians didn't help exercise their outsized power to be more independent—they were expected to help drag the rest of the country forward. Likewise, the free hand that had been given to several autonomous communities like Galicia and Andalusia were reined in. This was perhaps the most obvious reason why the megacorporations sided with him. They expected a leftist, especially one whose model was tolerant but still ultranationalist, would push hard to centralize government, economic, and social life in response to a crisis. From their point of view, one leader is easier to control than a dozen. Spain is the world's oldest "modern" nation-state, and ideals aside, the king's most fundamental role is to protect and ensure the continuity of the state.

Where things have gotten interesting is Spain's relationship with Euskal Herria. The Basque country weathered Crash 2.0 with some difficulty and found itself even more beholden to the megacorporations to the point where it became acceptable to question whether independence from Spain and France was worth becoming a vassal state of the Big Ten. The technomancer and AI Emergence crisis of 2071-72 further exacerbated those concerns for a state that prided itself on the national level of technical prowess and integration. The CFD crisis, it seems, is going to be the final nail in the coffin for an independent Basque nation-state. King Alfonso and the government have officially entreated that the Basque people rejoin the kingdom. Several megacorporations have expressed interest and support in this idea, especially MCT—the largest and most influential outsider force in the country. Even other NEEC states and the UN have expressed their support and commitment to help Euskal Herria recover from the catastrophe that it has become.

THE KING AND THE WEAVER

Johnny Spinrad has become King Alfonso's biggest corporate ally, and that provides him with a considerable amount of leverage while also being an infuriating weight around the king's neck. The king and his political allies leaned hard on Sol Media and the Vasquez Family in order for Spinrad Industries to finally acquire a corporation that Spinrad considered to be his personal nemesis (Sol Media published the reports that nearly destroyed his company in 2051, and he's sought revenge ever since). That all said, his empire in Europe stretches from Lisbon to Nice, and that makes Spain the heart of his corporate activities in many ways. It is in Spain's economic interests to be as hospitable as possible to Spinrad and Global Sandstorm. However, economic success isn't necessarily powerful enough to overcome the centuries of rivalry between Portugal and Spain, while also taking into account Spain's shifting relationship to Islam and the Middle East.

Spinrad's conversion to Islam sank perceptions of him across Spain (and southern Europe, generally). King Alfonso's friendship has made both even bigger targets to the Spanish right wing, especially since the king is already well known for being left-leaning in his politics and Catholicism. The conversion has benefitted both men in amongst Spanish Muslims, and it's been seen as increasingly beneficial to Renault-Fiat-Meridional.

Returning to larger realities, Spinrad Industries is, as far as many Spaniards see it, a new Portuguese empire. Portugal and Spain have rigorously maintained their independence from each other for over a millennium, even when they briefly shared a monarch. Portugal once sought to claim sovereignty over the Castilian throne before the Catholic Monarchs unified

Spain, and in western Spain it hasn't been forgotten that Portugal was the western frontier of Castille before the Moors conquered it. Between Spinrad's own corporations and the acquisition of Lusiada, the families who control Portugal now have direct influence on the lives of millions of Spaniards. This has led right-wing nationalists and magophobes to claim there is a masonic conspiracy (which brings in the specter of the Black Lodge) to destabilize Spain and place it under the control of the Awakened masters of the world who are under the guidance of the Antichrist (Pope Sixtus VI, the liberal, devil-worshipping Islamophile occupying the throne of St. Peter). All of this can be traced back to Portugal's Henry the Navigator, the prince who initiated Portugal's oceanic exploration and the birth of the Portuguese Empire, having been a grand master of the Knights Templar.

- This isn't just some wistful flair to add to the discussion. There are powerful people in Spain who genuinely think this, and it is entirely beneficial to maintain this story as fuel for ultranationalists, magophobes, metaphobes, and all of the usual suspects.The two largest right-wing parties in Spain are the *Partido Monárquico* (Monarchists) and *Partido Militar* (Militarists), both of which resent the hell out of the king being an ogre while having their identities intrinsically tied to the monarchy.

  The Militarists have been more troubled, especially as the general staff of the military has become more integrated and more externally aligned in favor of the corporations and the NEEC. After all, the international organizations actually use and value their operational existence. This, however, has effectively neutered any hope within the party for the military to serve as a nationalist defense against foreign and internal threats, even if it meant replacing the sovereign and/or civilian government like theTurkish military had done last century.

  Consequently, claims of foreign, magical interference and control of these institutions allow people within both parties to maintain their stated platforms while suggesting that the institutions themselves have failed, not the parties. As much as King Alfonso wants to preach some kind of liberalism, the people of Spain aren't benefitting in ways that are easily apparent, especially when the deficiencies such as loss of autonomy to the NEEC and megacorporations and the increasing disparity between corporation-aligned citizens and those working on the fringes has actually been increasing. For example, the talk about fixing Madrid doesn't account for how it's actually gentrification on a massive scale that would simply further displace many of the people stuck in the slums and outer community barrens to the south. People aren't exhausted; they're furious.
- Picador

This complex reality has made King Alfonso XIII's reign difficult. He's a technocratic monarch who wants his country to move forward, and he also wants to convince the NEEC and foreign megacorporations to invest in clearing and modernizing the Madrid sprawl so that it is no longer a blight, but the vanguard for the 22nd century. He is also attempting to do so while promoting environmental justice within Spain, as well as globally alongside efforts by men like Gary Grey and Balaji Padiyar. His efforts have to function within the confines imposed by those same megacorporations toward states that are unfriendly or overtly hostile to such work. He's trying to bring inclusion into the Spanish identity while making a conscious point of wearing his specific vision of Catholicism on his sleeve as a model for the rest of Spain. He wants tolerance and inclusion, but he exhibits exorbitant pride in being an ogre (as is his firstborn son and the heir-apparent, Prince Iván).

The King of Spain exhibits all of the traits of an iconoclast and demagogue, but he's also still a figurehead. However, being a figurehead means that he doesn't need to produce results to justify his positions. Perhaps the best word to describe his reign comes from liberation theology literature itself: *Praxis*, the act of manifesting social change based on a philosophical and theological belief—not just believing in the Word of God, but living the Word of God. From this perspective, King Alfonso XIII has been a model figure on behalf of his faith and race.

ALEXANDER MONAGHAN

- **Metatype:** Troll
- **Appearance:** Grey hair, 2.5m, polished horns
- **Location:** DeeCee

Being a Boston Brahmin, Alexander Monaghan grew up relatively privileged as orks and trolls go. As it happens, he was also a boarding-school roommate with the young man who would become King Alfonso XIII. Being a troll, he's experienced shock and pain, and endured plenty of hate, simply for being alive. As UCAS attorney general,

one of the innovations he brought to the Department of Justice was to instill a cadre of metahuman lawyers who weren't segregated entirely within the Civil Rights Division. Beyond that, however, was a unique perspective in addressing how the law affects metahumans, and specifically trolls and orks, on a daily basis without looking at how humans interact with them as a means of compliance with the law, but instead as inclusion into public and private spaces equally *and fairly*.

Monaghan and his supporters have silently formulated a vision over his term in office that culminated with the principle that while civil rights are based upon the inalienable abilities of all people to engage in civic life, that there are fundamental social rights that are based on the reality that metahumans, the Awakened, and non-*sapiens* species are fundamentally different—meaning that the government must acknowledge and operate in accommodation of these discrete, inalienable classifications in order to protect those citizens' free exercise of civil rights as protected under the Eleventh and Fourteenth Amendments. To say this is an unorthodox, and certainly unexpected, argument is an understatement. Chief Justice Richard Scott, a lion when it comes to metahuman equal rights, grilled General Monaghan extensively when he proffered the UCAS's oral argument as part of the government's involvement in a public retirement discrimination case, *Moore v. Maine*. It should be noted that, like the original plaintiff, Monaghan has late-stage Methuselah's Syndrome. He made a powerful assertion that UCAS jurisprudence focusing on facial equality and equal application actually discriminates against metahumans, namely ork and trolls, because application of facially neutral but clearly unequal laws has harmed and effectively curtailed metahuman civil rights in the UCAS. The explanation is too difficult to explain here, but what it means for people in the UCAS, and by extension for the people of the dozens of countries and megacorporate tribunals that look to the UCAS and CAS judiciaries for guidance, is that it may no longer be sufficient under the law to treat all metahumans equally. Instead, legal entities may have to extend "reasonable accommodations" to individuals who don't conform to the norm—that is, to the life of the mundane, human UCAS citizen.

- It's difficult to convey what could happen if the Court were to adopt even some of Monaghan's position when it decides *Moore*. The Supreme Court has basically limited the scope of civil rights to being able to freely engage in commerce and exercise certain rights like voting. Even the rather absolute wording of the Bill of Rights depends on how those rights are defined (the right for criminal defendants to exclude illegally-obtained evidence from being used against them at trial was barely upheld as late as three years ago).

  To put this in perspective, Chief Justice Scott's own career was built on winning the *Grumman* case in 2036, where he successfully argued that Tulsa, Oklahoma violated the Constitution when it segregated metahumans into their own inadequate school away from human children. It was the metahuman equivalent of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision that ended racial segregation in the U.S. However, the fundamental assumption for all civil rights jurisprudence in the UCAS is that everyone is equal when certain traits are ignored.

  Monaghan's argument, which has never before been the position of the UCAS, is that metahumans are so different from each other and that equal treatment under the law means the government would have to enforce the law in discriminatory ways with the intention of producing equal effects with regard to each metatype. In its simplest incarnation, and specific to this case, the UCAS wants to enforce the law in a way that affects metahumans equally, with respect to how all metatypes mature and age at markedly different rates. This means orks and trolls could retire earlier because they die earlier, while dwarves and elves may not collect Social Security for decades longer. More immediately, it means that food subsidies and commodities would be more heavily directed toward trolls and orks since their dietary needs require more calories, specifically more protein-based calories—something that I assure you will be violently opposed by non-trogs who are already seeing their food prices go up as agriculture conditions get worse.
- DangerSensei

- In some ways the new research indicating that trog lifespans are not as short as had been believed complicates this, but in some ways it simplifies it. If the shorter lifespans seen to date truly are a result of poverty and poor health care, then that increases the urgency to address those areas. The earlier retirement age, though, would go by the wayside. Some think ork and troll activists would be loath to give up this bargaining chip, but others believe that they will be so relieved to be released from this sentence of early death that the retirement-age issue won't matter to them. (I suppose I could say "us" rather than "them," but reportorial habits do not break easy.)
- Sunshine

Beyond the obvious matter of civil rights, Monaghan is the UCAS's top lawyer. He supervis-

es all criminal prosecutions by the government, enforcing civil matters ranging from antitrust to treaty obligations, being the president's most senior legal counsel, and overseeing several law-enforcement agencies. The largest matter encompassing all of those functions has been the CFD crisis and the Boston lockdown. The FBI and IRS have been crawling up NeoNET's ass for the last few years even since the Boston sprawl had to be quarantined, and the entire mess has made things difficult for NeoNET and other megacorporations within the UCAS. It isn't lost on anyone that Monaghan has a personal stake in this because he is Bostonian to his bones, and he has recused himself and placed the matter entirely on the shoulders of the Deputy AG in order to avoid any legal entanglements. This doesn't change the fact that Monaghan has personal interests at stake that have kept the specter of interference alive, which is to the corps' benefit as the matter is reaching what appears to be a tipping point in negotiations over what the UCAS government can squeeze out of NeoNET and the others to pay for basically killing a major city. As I said, Monaghan's job is to oversee all of the government's legal matters, and unsurprisingly, virtually every part of DOJ and the rest of the government has business with NeoNET, and an entire office now exists as a firewall between Monaghan and the Boston matter. The fun part of this is how this means that there is an entire office full of secrets that everyone wants to get into.

Related to this is how Monaghan and Secretary of Business Fortune Relf have found themselves in conflict over matters of legal policy involving the Big Ten and the Contract Court since Business now oversees all legal matters arising within that court. The Business Department exists to facilitate the activities of corporations, especially the megacorporations, while Monaghan has become increasingly disenchanted with the relationship between the UCAS and the megacorporations within the framework of the Business Recognition Accords. Relf refuses to acknowledge CFD as a defense against the repatriation of corporate citizen to their home megacorporations under the Thirteenth Amendment, while Monaghan and Homeland Secretary Jenkins insist on its validity in asylum claims. This wrangling has extended to the White House and Congress, and as is the case with Boston, this is a political matter as election season heats up with each side trying to one up the other with anecdotal evidence, conflict legislative solutions sought, and the amount of conflict and corruption this has caused within the Marshals Service. Monaghan, as it happens, oversees and also serves as the enforcement arm of the Business Department—and, to a lesser extent, the FBI, giving him multiple roles to play in all this drama.

CFD isn't the exclusive source of conflicts with Business, but the most dramatic (and most likely to involve runners). Monaghan is a classical capitalist and doesn't necessarily see the value of the existing BRA legal regime as having a net benefit to the UCAS markets. While he's all for smaller government, he's allowed the Antitrust Division a freer hand to go after the megacorps in order to protect free market competition between BRA-protected megacorporations and UCAS-based A-rated multinationals and unrated corporations. This has led to a marked increase in information and intelligence gathering by DOJ, FBI, and IRS investigators as well as a commensurate increase in "proactive" counterintelligence by megacorporations across the UCAS, especially when faced with "chickenshit" and "protectionist" applications of laws. Furthermore, because Antitrust holds regulatory hearings in addition to bringing court lawsuits, the megacorporations are seeking to go over Monaghan's head to Congress. In response, DOJ has increased its own legal and shadowy political maneuvering against them. Monaghan endorses American capitalism and is on the record praising the economic successes of countries that don't entirely acknowledge and enforce the BRA as a counterpoint to the UCAS's blind adherence to the BRA as written, which is something Secretary Despain has also shown an interest in exploring.

Finally, since 2018, the DOJ has had legal jurisdiction over Denver and Anglo reservations within the NAN with regard to enforcement of various treaty obligations and matters. Since 2074, the UCAS's extraterritorial jurisdiction over those areas and other matters involving the NAN has been with the unspoken consent of the Sovereign Tribal Council. Which, of course, was created by the Treaty of Denver. I hope you see where this is going. Some reservations have been actively resisting attempts at governance by the UCAS, and this resistance has included attacks on Rez Agents. This has been further agitated by NAN actors who are impeding, directly and indirectly, DOJ activities within the NAN, or who are undermining enforcement and conflict resolution mechanisms (tribunals, etc.). With Ghostwalker

finally rejecting any foreign claims on the sovereignty of Denver, this has had the added problem of increasing shadow activities between the NAN, or parties within it, and the UCAS and CAS governments. This has also led to problems within the UCAS because the DOJ has to intervene in local disputes where the NAN or an interested party can invoke the DOJ's enforcement duty. This mostly occurs within border states involving free passage and blends into civil rights and other areas such as antitrust. More NAN-based corporations, and even some Tír-based corps, are using the DOJ or threatening to involve it as leverage against state and local governments to gain concessions like tax cuts and subsidies. Monaghan has stated he's neutral on the matter, and that the law is the law, especially when it comes to ensuring "free" markets. However, he's been covertly seeking congressional support to undermine existing laws to favor UCAS corporations now that treaty obligations can be dismissed.

BALAJI PADIYAR

- **Metatype:** Ork
- **Appearance:** Greying black hair, 2.1m, blackened tusks
- **Location:** Kolkata, Indian Union

The former Indian foreign minister, UN secretary-general (2055-70), and corporate CEO has become a global ambassador for the cause of metahuman rights and megacorporate responsibility—and the intersection between those realities. Padiyar became increasingly resistant to uncontained megacorporate violence and conflict in 2060, during the height of that era's corporate wars, after realizing that the company he ran, Ganges Softworks, was tied to the "terrorist" bombing that killed Renrarku Corporate Court Justice Chandria and critically wounded the Indian Commerce Minister, a friend and ally of Padiyar's. Having such intimate and direct awareness of how Fuchi—specifically the Villiers—and Renraku used his countrymen as proxies to be killed over a pissing match between a few elites sparked a fire in him that has burned bright ever since.

His covert influence through the remnants of the UN's Commission on Megacorporate Affairs (COMA) has been diluted and purged, especially in the last decade as the UCAS has become more globally active and has become the largest contributor of forces to the UN Armed Forces and other UN and international entities that he and COMA used as machines to direct in their anti-corporate efforts. The UCAS is the most megacorporate-friendly state, not only among UN members but overall. In spite of President Colloton's disputes and shifting alliances with megacorporations like Ares, Aztechnology, Telestrian, and NAN-based AAs, she is not and never will be the commander-in-chief that sees her role as bringing megacorporations to heel. Her potential successors, on the other hand, have shown inclinations toward those goals.

Secretary Despain, specifically, has shown his willingness to renegotiate parts of the Business Recognition Accords since Attorney General Monaghan has publicly stated that there would be legal and economic benefits domestically if the UCAS were to scale back its absolute deference to the Corporate Court. As a result, Despain and Padiyar have met on numerous occasions to discuss the matter, especially since Despain has found himself more active globally through its commitments to the UN Armed Forces, Interpol, and related agencies. Despain isn't alone in seeking Padiyar's counsel, and he is advising numerous countries on how to shape their commitments toward the UN and acceptance and enforcement of UN and other internationally negotiated policies. Padiyar's not anti-business, but he is a strong believer in the idea that neither corporations nor nations can be a part of the international community, specifically the UN, and remain unaccountable to the rest of the community, and that to reject accountability only leads to conflict and destruction. Here he is able to cite conflicts like the Azt-Am War, the Boston Lockdown, the SOX, the *Teketeza* in Kenya, and even the inherent evils of the Desert Wars themselves.

- Criticizing the *Teketeza* is a masterful political move since it was premised in part on the defense of and vindication for UNAF forces that cooperated (read: answered to) with the Big Ten security forces protecting the Kilimanjaro Mass Driver and who were slaughtered as a result of that cooperation. He supported the deployment of those forces under his tenure as a check on the Corporate Court, preventing its forces rape and pillage the region as the mass driver was built. But like all good intentions, it failed miserably, even while he was Secretary-General. Lezabatxe eliminated any pretense of impartiality, and

the UNAF became just another occupational force that suffered the same fate as all hostile occupational forces.

- Thorn

There was a longstanding conflict between Padiyar and Iker Lezabatxe of Euskal Herria, the UN Secretary-General who succeeded Padiyar in 2070. Padiyar has been working to overcome this division, attempting to persuade Lezabatxe to change his views of the megacorporations in light of the CFD outbreak and how it has affected Euskal Herria and the rest of the world. As it has become clear that the outbreak was the fault of the megacorporations, the reality that the outbreak may cost Lezabatxe's homeland its independence has begun to sink in. Moreover, the reality that the punitive measures being sought will be woefully insufficient and has made it clear to Lezabatxe that he's not only on the wrong side of the megacorporations, but as the UN Secretary-General his actions in implementing pro-corporate policies have mobilized government and institutional resources into an unaccountable economic and political war machine the Corporate Court can use to crush any remaining holdouts to the unaccountable and unified corporate regime the Court has sought for decades. For Padiyar, it's personal that this machine is being built upon the bones of COMA and other agencies and operations that Padiyar created to prevent exactly this scenario.

Lezabatxe is not expected to seek or accept a third term, and both men have already been maneuvering on behalf of their preferred candidates for the term that begins in 2080. As it happens, Lezabatxe may have actually found common ground with Padiyar in Natalia Davydovskaya, of Russia's National Supreme Soviet and the General Staff of the Red Army overseeing the GRU. There are numerous reasons why any Russian official would ever be considered for a major UN post, but here's an important one: Davydovskaya may have found a way to end the war with Yakut. Both want peace, and a peaceful Yakut could potentially become a great ally for Padiyar. The appeal to Lezabatxe is the prosperity peace could bring for megacorps such as Saeder-Krupp and Evo, with Russia no longer engaged in a fifty-year border war. More than anything, however, Russia would be a powerful ally in the clandestine bloc of states that he has sought to unite in an effort to resist the Corporate Court, especially as it has thoroughly overtaken the UN. He sees the integration of the UN into the Court's bureaucratic machinery as inevitable if it cannot be resisted, and while Despain's rhetoric appeals to his ideals, the idea of Russian resistance to the Court is far more realistic than the prospect of the UCAS suddenly performing an about-face on the corporate-controlled world that it created.

RONALD DESPAIN

- **Metatype:** Ork
- **Appearance:** Black hair, 1.9m, filed-down tusks, long scar on left side of forehead
- **Location:** DeeCee

Ronald Despain is easily the most powerful trog politician in the western hemisphere thanks to his current position as the UCAS Secretary of Defense and as one of the top two candidates seeking the Republican Party nomination for president ever since Angela Colloton announced that she wouldn't run for a fourth term.

Despain has been well-regarded within DeeCee and with the public due to his assertiveness and competence, but the withdrawal of UCAS military forces from Denver may come back to haunt him even though the decision was made by Colloton. However, that is a single event in contrast with the overall success of the military under his management in maintaining the Boston Quarantine Zone, engaging in peacekeeping operations through the United Nations, and projecting power through example in the Desert Wars and as advisors with corporations and governments across the world. He has vigorously campaigned to Congress and the public for expanding the military in line with Colloton's policies and party rhetoric going back to the Yeats campaign in 2057, and the number of active Defense Department uniformed and civilian personnel has exploded to nearly one million, a size unseen since the Treaty of Richmond, and another half million reserve and guard units that can be called up as necessary. Ten years ago, Colloton and Despain despaired at the fact that more corporate security forces stood along the Chicago CZ walls than UCAS soldiers two decades ago. The reverse is true with regard to the Boston QZ, which one could perhaps see as a victory for sovereign states.

- A victory to shame even Pyrrhus.
- Chainmaker

Given the rapid expansion of the UCAS military and the support such expansion has earned from the Corporate Court, among other esteemed bodies, it seems rather incongruous that Despain has shared a considerable amount of skepticism if not outright enmity towards the megacorporations in his political rhetoric. He preaches state sovereignty and freer markets that would allow local business to play on a more even level with megacorporations, but at the same time his foreign policy language is markedly in line with the megacorporations in how militarily-enforced peace would benefit everyone. To support this, he has seen fit to offer UCAS unilateral assistance, while also acting through UNAF and other international missions around the world. It would seem, as many DeeCee pundits have argued, that the UCAS is the only country that can maintain a global UCAS military footprint, and that it would be in the world's best interest. After all, how different might the world be if the UCAS, and the U.S. before it, had not withdrawn into isolation after the Cold War ended?

- The United States withdrawing from NATO prevented World War III.
- Red Anya

- Perhaps that was a mistake.
- Haze

Returning to his role in the Denver debacle, Despain has focused a considerable amount of time with his North American counterparts, especially CAS and Sioux leaders. He has spent a considerable amount of time with the Sioux due to the necessity of sending massive forces through its airspace to Denver, and while that matter has been settled for now, he has made it clear that the UCAS military will maintain readiness in the event it needs to return to Denver. The Sioux Nation has made its position clear that in spite of Ghostwalker's actions, it still sees the UCAS as a clear and present danger, but Despain doesn't seem to show serious concern for its capacity to retaliate if the UCAS acts. Instead, he's been courting those leaders into cooperating to prevent another Ghostwalker, another Chicago, or another Tsimshian.

- How much of this is saber rattling, and how much is a realistic threat of war within North America?
- Mika

- There is a consensus within the local intelligence community that the SDF is stretched too thin—between AMC, Tsimshian, Seattle, Denver, Yellowstone, and the UCAS border—to repel an invasion, and while the entire nation can be militarized it doesn't mean that the nation can functionally muster enough people to oust an occupying force. Furthermore, the corps would pick the UCAS if forced to choose sides. Fewer people in the Sioux, and the NAN, see the UCAS as an existential threat. It's hard to sell success-driven Cheyenne youth on defending the integrity of the nation when the land in dispute is barely habitable Rocky Mountain rangeland, especially when neither the CAS nor the PCC are inclined to side with the UCAS.
- Kay St. Irregular

For a decade, the Republican Party has downplayed the platform planks calling for reunification with the CAS and California after the failed New Revolution coup d'état. Despain, reaching back to the 2057 Yeats/Penchyk platform for inspiration, has raised many of the catastrophes since that period as reasons why reunification, or at least persistent collaboration, aren't only desirable but necessary. His political speeches have drawn a clear line from the *laissez-faire* megacorporate policies of Technocrats and even his own party to disasters such as the plight of Chicago, the SCIRE shutdown, corp wars from 2059-61, the Saito regime, Tsimshian, Boston, Albuquerque, and even the fate of Denver. In fact, it shouldn't surprise anyone that Anne Penchyk herself supports Despain's candidacy over Martin. Beyond North America, he wants to resurrect NATO and other political-military alliances, and he has been actively exploiting the DOD's size and scope in making the UCAS a part of nearly every UN mission.

- It's disheartening to think of how unpredictable Albuquerque's Matrix has become, as it's ground zero for CFD and still contains some of the most valuable minds in the PCC and the world when it comes to the Matrix. The local response has been unique, and I hope that the resources and the willingness for so many to take risks will help resolve this threat.
- Netcat

- It's time to stop adding Machine to Man, and add Man to Machine.
- Plan 9

- He makes a strong argument about how a stronger national government could've withstood MCT's rapacious

pillaging of Tsimshian land, or been able to provide a more effective force to prevent the initial outbreak that forced the CZ's erection, but it is still premised on the idea that the leaders of said government wouldn't have been susceptible to the corporations' influence and control. Governments are still composed of people, and people are fallible. The federal government is hugely powerful compared to its neighbors, and yet time and again the UCAS has been the first to like the boot heels of every megacorporate CEO who offers it them. Concentration of power isn't a check on abuse without accountability, and Despain's campaign may speak of accountability without showing plans to enact it.

- Cosmo

As an ork, Despain has shown an acute awareness of his importance to the trog community as well as the dual-sided nature of that position being martial. He has encouraged recruitment and retention by appealing to the meritocractic nature of the "new" military and the relative lack of racism throughout the armed forces. However, appealing to trogs in this way further reinforces the stereotypes of us being warlike and violent, traits that he adamantly denies are part of the trog condition—at least, not any more than they are part of the human or elven or dwarven conditions. To that end, much of the publicity and marketing has focused on the more mundane roles and elements of military careers, and the value those skills provide that benefit part-time and veteran soldiers in civilian life.

Despain and AG Monaghan differ a great deal on civil rights, with Despain firmly on the side of equality being based on how metahumans are similar and are expected to perform the same tasks equally within the military. Of course, it's easier to argue against troll-sized accommodations when rigging is integral to most roles they are otherwise excluded from, but he has made it clear that he doesn't see value in purposeful segregation, which is what he sees Monaghan arguing for.

ANNE PENCHYK

- **Metatype:** Ork
- **Appearance:** Black hair w/ white stripe, 1.9m, sapphire on right tusk
- **Location:** DeeCee

One of the original trailblazers for ork and troll rights and recognition, Anne Penchyk makes it difficult to avoid simply listing her accomplishments, as if this were the second paragraph of an obituary. However, it's also a testament to how much she has eschewed the spotlight in spite of the fact that she is easily the most powerful and important person here.

Anne Penchyk was already on the road to a successful PR career in Wisconsin when she goblinized in the mid-'20s. Taking advantage of the powers of the Matrix, she continued to promote her business almost entirely virtually to avoid having clients deal with the fact that she was an ork. However, she eventually realized that she couldn't stay hidden, and instead chose to make herself a public figure. In the '30s, she served several terms as one of the first metahumans in Congress. She developed several important relationships while there (most significantly for the time being General Franklin Yeats) but also developed a reputation for being tough-minded and relentless in causes for metahumans' and women's rights. Penchyk eventually returned to private life in Wisconsin, but she remained extremely active in politics. She founded the Empowerment Coalition, a nonpartisan group that promotes female leadership in corporate, political, and public life. Following the tainted 2056 presidential election, General Yeats called on her to be his running mate when he was chosen to be the Republican nominee in the 2057 special election. For both, Chicago was a special cause—for Yeats, the city was his hometown, and for Penchyk, it was where her brother was trapped behind the wall with nearly a million other people.

After insect spirits murdered General Yeats in the early summer, Anne Penchyk stepped up to run as the Republican nominee in his place. She eventually came in third, behind Dunkelzahn and Kenneth Brackhaven, and it's strongly believed that she could've won had Dunkelzahn not run. Following Dunkelzahn's own assassination on his inauguration night, one of the gifts he made in his will was to create and fund the John Timmons Memorial Foundation to promote metahuman relations in the name of his first translator, a young divinity student who was eventually assassinated by an anti-Awakened terrorist. Penchyk readily took on the responsibility for managing the fund, and for two decades she has used it to successfully fund and promote organizations that promote metahuman rights, metahuman cooperation and inclusion, and other programs seeking to increase peace and justice across the world with the ultimate goal of benefiting all metahumans. This in-

cludes funding programs aimed at areas such as environmental justice, immigration reform, and faith-based engagement.

Penchyk's work and influence are most easily recognized in the UCAS and CAS. She has become a political queen-maker in both nations, but especially within the UCAS's Republican Party. Penchyk recruited Angela Colloton into running for president in 2067, whose campaign she chaired and helped to run. It's difficult to explain her influence on CAS elections, and the contrast between Republicans' overwhelming victories across the UCAS in 2068 and 2072 and the party's near implosion and crushing defeat by southern Technocrats in 2072 couldn't be more clear if it were staged. What is rather clear in both nations, however, is that the number of women, metahumans, and specifically trog women holding offices in both countries is at an all-time high. Indeed, DeeCee has been derided as a gynocracy by people even on JackPoint when politics arises. As it happens, Anne Penchyk, the EC, or some other organization associated with the Timmons Fund are directly linked to nearly all of these officeholders—not simply at the federal level, but for thousands of people in all levels of government and in all branches. She holds influence from the Oval Office to the courts of Douglas County, Nebraska. Receiving an endorsement from Penchyk can and has made careers, and she can also break them just as rapidly. The clearest example is during the last Michigan gubernatorial primary when runners delivered evidence to the EC that Melissa Han, the coalition's preferred candidate, had been involved in some deeply transphobic activities. Within hours, Han's entire campaign apparatus evaporated beneath her even before the media could find out what happened. Penchyk and the EC eventually threw their support behind Democrat Julian Mercer, and Han became *persona non grata*.

Penchyk's influence isn't limited to elected politics, nor to the UCAS and CAS. She and the EC are responsible for the election of at least three members of the PCC Board of Directors (Lydia Cruz, Josephine Madalena, and Amanda Utall), a Sioux Chief (Winona Begaye, Navajo), and a member of the Sovereign Tribal Council (Joaquin Shendo) and has helped promote both men and women within the corporate community, especially among multinationals such as DocWagon, Coca-Cola, Warpdrive Systems, Citi, and Amalgamated Studios, and local corporations like Emerald City Group, TRW, EarthWyrm Media, and Peat-Marwick-Thorne-Mabasu. Penchyk's—and thus the EC's—biggest push in the last few years has been to facilitate the advancement of trolls, orks, and Awakened licensed professional within North America, primarily doctors and lawyers, which pits the massive expense of the required schooling against the relatively resource-poor ork and troll communities.

Anne Penchyk's activities through the Timmons Fund have her collaborating with or aiding countless groups and individuals across the world. In addition to that full-time position, she serves on the Draco Foundation Board of Visitors with a number of other luminaries to advise and help represent the interests and goals of the foundation and the organizations it oversees (Ancient Wisdom Fund), finances (the Dunkelzahn Challenge Funds), or is related to because they were also created under Dunkelzahn's will (DIMR, ASPS). Additionally, Penchyk serves as a board director for the Genesis Consortium, Reality, Inc. and recently joined the board for Spinrad North America.

However, all of this activity is becoming increasingly more apparent as a means of Penchyk establishing her legacy. She is well into her eighth decade and is a goblinized ork. She has never been inclined to seek out rejuvenation or age-defying treatments, and so cognizance of her own mortality and her fearlessness in speaking her mind has made it clear who she hopes will move metahuman rights forward after she's gone. Penchyk has three children, one human and two orks, and two have followed in her footsteps. The third, William Penchyk, is one of three ork doctors at the Cleveland Clinic. Serena Penchyk-Simmons (human) is a senior VP with Mothers of Metahumans, and Gabrielle Penchyk (ork) is the director of the North American Legislative Exchange.

- One thing that has long distinguished more-prosperous demographic groups from less-prosperous ones is that the more-prosperous groups have an ability to pass funds to younger generations; less-prosperous groups often have to spend resources on older generations, working to keep them out of poverty. People like Penchyk cannot reverse this trend on her own, but she is focused on having what she has built help as many people as possible, rather than just remaining concentrated in her direct descendants. This is not anywhere on the level of Dunkelzahn's will, but there will still be some maneuvering for various pieces of her legacy.
- Mr. Bonds

THE FACE OF JUSTICE

There are two Timmons organizations: the foundation and the fund. The foundation is the umbrella organization, and the fund is a private program within the foundation that is responsible for most of the charitable giving done by the organization. There is a complicated web of funds and entities operating under the foundation umbrella that are used by Penchyk's and Dunkelzahn's supporters to advance equality and prosperity. These include the Haeffner Family Fund, Houston Fund, Empowerment Fund, and the Samantha Villiers Memorial Fund. The foundation is responsible for more overt marketing and program activities that Penchyk is willing to make public, while the funds—the Timmons Fund in particular—are used to support outside programs directly and discreetly. The foundation is also responsible for the political outreach and advocacy to comply with international campaign and charity laws.

At present, virtually all Timmons Fund activity falls into four tracks: Equality, Economic Justice, Immigration, and Religious Engagement.

EQUALITY

The primary purpose of the foundation and fund is to promote equality for all people. This was the exclusive focus of the fund for years, but as its scope and views have expanded, the mission to promote equality remains firm. There is no shortage of need, and beyond providing financial aid to Mothers of Metahumans, NAAAP, ORC, and others, the fund is also able to provide in-kind support by subsidizing or contracting out resources to assist these groups on specific projects, especially where multiple groups are collaborating or focused on shared goals. The fund channels considerable amounts of money toward marketing and media to enrich Charisma Associates, Spinrad Media, EarthWyrm Media, and Ares to name a few.

One of the great tensions that Penchyk and the fund constantly struggle with is whether to promote inclusion and integration or to promote self-selecting/self-segregated community development where metahumans enjoy popular majorities at the expense of being removed from communities with larger human populations. This reflects the tensions that have long stressed movements seeking equality for groups based on discrete, and generally inalienable, traits such as ethnicity, national origin, or religious creed. In fact, the great irony is that this has led to instances of conflict within the fund and the foundation as programs that encourage prosperity tend to focus on these distinct metahuman communities, while equality programs stress inclusion by humans and integration of metahumans and the Awakened into mundane, human communities. It's hard to imagine the fund ever not promoting the Black Ork Defence Collective in the Merseysprawl or Seattle's Ork Underground, but those same promotions have been criticized for facilitating the dilution of trog communities and power through isolation or racial gentrification.

- This is the point where a lot of do-gooders founder, because so many things can sound good. At some point, you have to buckle down and decide what it is you truly want, then go after it.
- Kay St. Irregular

PROSPERITY

Anne Penchyk has always been an economic progressive and supports engagement with economically distressed and underserved communities, which tend to be but are not exclusively metahuman or composed of metahuman majorities. Prosperity can come in many forms, and the fund contributes to causes that seek to wage and compensation equality, organizing and labor rights, community investments and public-private collaborations, and environmental justice. The premise behind this is that metahuman prosperity is inexorably linked to the health of our communities and planet, and that having financial resources isn't enough if those resources simply allow people to survive and not leave a lasting legacy. Indeed, the sales pitch behind the fund's environmental justice campaigns has been to argue that wealth within metahuman and Awakened communities is more than money—it continues to a lasting ecosphere of coexistence and well-being.

The single largest recipient of fund contributions goes to Sierra, Inc., which is still run by Gary Grey. Like Penchyk, Grey is reaching the twilight of his life and focusing on his legacy. Sierra, WWF (financed heavily by Masaru, who is Penchyk's biggest supporter of the Draco Foundation trustees), Save Our Seas, and corporations like the Genesis Consortium (through KAM, another DF trustee), Izolo, Inc., Telestrian, and others have reciprocal

financing deals with the Timmons Fund to promote economic and environmental well-being and counter ongoing destruction of heavily metahuman and Awakened communities that are often used as literal dumping grounds for harmful pollutants and used for destructive practices by corporations because those communities otherwise have little or no economic or political capabilities to protect themselves.

The Timmons Fund has also financed and supported efforts by Balaji Padiyar and others to expand and develop an international Green and Awakened bloc of nations, extraterritorial megacorporations, and major NGOs that seek to promote these values for the benefit of their people and toward all metahumans worldwide. These activities include promoting economic and political policies internally and within international bodies such as the UN General Assembly, the NEEC Social Policy Commission and various implementation committees, and working groups and task forces within the Pacific Prosperity Group and the *Philike Hetairia* (a.k.a., the Black Sea Friendship Association). This also overlaps with the fund's immigration program.

IMMIGRATION

While the fund and many other programs within the foundation promote equality and prosperity within communities, it hasn't been lost on Penchyk and others that immigration and the free movement of metahumans is both an economic necessity and a motivation for metahumans and metasapients who are seeking opportunities in new communities. Additionally, the fund has provided nuyen and support for refugee and internally displaced groups across the world.

One of the biggest direct recipients from the fund is the Catholic Ork Immigration Network, which works to help immigrants of all metatypes. Among the figures running COIN are Samuel Lamptey, Sr., the retired Seattle Seahawk player who hails from the Ivory Coast of Africa, and his son, Samuel Lamptey Jr., a rising star in the Republican Party and a junior congressman who represents Tacoma. The Lampteys are major proponents of freer immigration and cross-border travel as a means of regional economic growth, but they also recognize that immigration and citizenship matters are of special concern for trolls and orks given historical and ongoing persecution of metahumans in numerous nations. COIN assists on both ends of the process, assisting emigration out of various countries (by legal and sometimes not-so legal methods) and with the legal and resettlement support on the receiving end. Interestingly enough, one of the nations COIN is most active in is Spain because of its symbolic value as a major nation-state with a history of internal discrimination as well as discrimination against foreigners, but it also suffers from the stresses of NEEC requirements, along with the demands arising from the whims and needs of megacorporate labor.

RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT

The Timmons Fund is one of the largest private financiers to faith-based charities and outreach organizations, and this is a reflection of the fund's namesake. Before he became Dunkelzahn's translator, John Timmons was a divinity student. His greatest personal and public accomplishment was to reject the use of religion as a wedge between people, especially when used to pit those of faith against metahumanity and the Awakened. With the dramatic fall and rise and fluctuations within organized religion and faith-based institutions since the Awakening, the Timmons Fund has contributed nuyen to lay and evangelical religious groups focused on brining people together through faith. This is easily the most controversial track the fund engages in, and yet incredibly lucrative for the fund itself, thanks to contributors who see the value in this track.

The most obvious collaborator with the fund is the Roman Catholic Church, and the fund chose sides long ago to help assist the more progressive branch that supported Pope John XXV and now Pope Sixtus VI. The fund has also, however, contributed to the Islamic Renaissance Movement, and both have in turn engaged with varying success elements of the Islamic Unity Movement and smaller groups, especially in South and Southeast Asia.

Some of the smaller recipients of support from the fund and allies of Penchyk's include the many theurgic magical traditions that have grown into their own over the last fifteen years since the advent of the Unified Magical Theory. By financing or assisting these groups, the goal is to assist Awakened groups in normalizing thaumaturgy with mundane metahumans by showing that it is a common element that should be appreciated instead of feared and hated.

Related to that is the reality that there are theocracies, magocracies, and combinations of the two that exist in effect, if not in fact. Penchyk has often found herself at odds with leaders of nations like Amazonia and the Tírs because she insists that persecution of the Awakened elsewhere doesn't justify repression of any metahuman. She has become intensely focused on the recent opening of relations with the leaders of Yakut, especially in the hope of ending its war with Russia, and also on the activities in Mongolia and the reign of the ork Bogd Khan, the "living Buddha," his connection with Tibet, and all of China in between the two regions.

SHADOW'S EDGE

With all this activity, it's impossible to deny that Anne Penchyk's actions bleed into the shadows. Her successes are based around massive amounts of personal and economic capital and publicity, and the shadows are the perfect place for someone with a lot of money to advance a personal agenda. Her shadow activity becomes even more clear in light of how many enemies she and the fund have that tend to react to opposition with violence. Publicly, Penchyk has always opposed physical violence and the uses of economic and social force in ways that stretch the boundaries of the law. To the extent she maintains that policy in private, Penchyk has often resorted to her allies and ties to the shadows to disrupt and deter imminent violence and disturbances rather than to respond in kind—whether it be against the Sons of Sauron or Alamos 20,000.

Collecting information that can be used for publicity or for political or economic coercion, however, is fair game. Penchyk and the fund have had hands in financing shadow work exposing politicians and corporate figures of being in the Human Nation or the groups affiliated with Alamos 20,000. Mothers of Metahumans gets considerable, deserved credit for its non-violent actions in toppling the Saito regime in California, but it was aided in large part by intelligence and infrastructure financed by the fund to cripple or sever ties to allies who might have helped him counter Ares's military engagements.

Finally, when necessary, Penchyk has shown zero hesitation in using the shadows for direct action to protect herself, her allies, and metahumans in general. There are female-only gangs such as the Desolation Angels and the Shooters that have been called upon for protection or reprisal, and this has included instances of internal control within Penchyk's and the fund's spheres of influence. People who have betrayed Penchyk don't tend to fare well. If they're lucky, they only see themselves ruined financially or professionally. While there has never been a direct connection between her and whoever is responsible for taking action, the message is clear that disloyalty is not an option.

OR'ZET GLOSSARY

Or'zet, the language of orks, has a strange history. As far as modern times goes, it starts with Dunkelzahn's will, like so many weird things in the Sixth World. The dragon left an ork named Robert Page the Or'zet Codex, which Page used to develop—or rediscover, depending on who you talk to—the Or'zet language. The language then became a rallying point of ork society, a way for orks show their cultural pride. It also has the pleasant effect of being easier to pronounce than most Sixth World languages, since it is designed for mouths with tusks.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

b, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v, w, y, and **z** are all just like standard English. There are no consonant blends, so **th** is pronounced like *t* followed by *h* and **sh** is pronounced like *s* followed by *h*.

c is pronounced like the *sh* in *sheet* or *bash*.

q is pronounced like the *ch* in *cheese* or *scratch*.

x is pronounced the *ch* in *Bach* or *chutzpah*.

' (the apostrophe) is like a *k* but all the way down your throat, like you're gagging. This is the "letter" that makes Or'zet hard to speak if you're not an ork or a troll; humans tend to vomit when they try to say it correctly. To pronounce this one yourself, either hawk like you're about to cough up a hairball or just treat it like the glottal stop in *kitten* or *button*.

a, e, i, o, and **u** are pronounced the same way as in the words, *h**a**t tr**i**ck m**e**ss n**o** m**u**d*. If there are two vowels in a row, you say it a little longer, as in Japanese.

Most words have the accent on the first syllable, or on a double vowel if there is one.

SELECT WORDS

bi'ce *interj*. Please/thanks/you're welcome/excuse me.

buunda *interj*. Expletive, often accompanied by an obscene gesture to show contempt for the recipient.

cerri *n*. Sibling. Or'zet has no separate words to distinguish brother and sister. *Slang*: A chummer, especially an ork or troll gang member.

djoto *n*. Life, literally "the way of life." *Slang*: SINless, a life of crime.

drundeah *n*. Execution. *Slang*: To murder someone.

duky curet! *interj*. Goodbye!

egrand *n*. Protector. *Slang*: Crime lord, gang boss.

egrand'rohodo *Slang*: A pimp or a girlfriend's parents.

ereth *n*. Home.

ereth'cerri *Slang*: Ghetto or turf.

eth *n*. Group. *Slang*: Gang.

eunabo *adj*. Best pick of the lot. Slang: Sexually desirable.

fahd *n*. Sacrifice. *Slang*: A personal sacrifice for a chummer.

glok *n*. Runner. *Slang*: Shadowrunner.

grumoge *v*. To fight. *Slang*: A brawl. Usually screamed before starting one.

hez *n*. Tusk. *Slang*: An ork's courage, nerve and sexual prowess.

hurlg *n*. Alcohol. *Slang*: Booze.

norgoz *n*. Weapon. *Slang*: Gun.

quaalz *n*. Idiocy, as in "full of quaalz". *Slang*: The police.

rohodo *n*. Sex.

skraa *interj*. Greeting shout.

tharon *adj*. Dead. *Slang*: Corporate.

turgma *n*. Traitor. *Slang*: Snitch.

ujnort *n*. Non-orks.

vrukart *(inf) n*. Boyfriend.

vruken *(inf) n*. Girlfriend.

vut *n.(vul.)* Drek. Used as an expletive.

wejoto *n*. "Against the way." *Slang*: An ork rights activist.

yerz *n*. Money. *Slang*: Someone's bribe or cut.

yerzed out *adj*. An item made to appear fancier, perhaps to ostentatious degrees

zakhan *n*. An enemy.

USEFUL PHRASES

Cuto eyume'tu'? *What's your name?*

Bi'ce, s'azate kom ya Or'zet. *Please speak to me in Or'zet.*

Bi'ce, s'azate 'om p'oni. *Please say that again.*

Bi'ce, s'azate saporeya. *Please speak more slowly.*

Bi'ce, qlavate me hze ya. *Please don't spit on me.*

Ya me s'azate Or'zet. *I don't speak Or'zet.*

S'azate tu' Inglic? *Do you speak English?*

Bi'ce, edinu *A bottle of booze, please.*

Hgecu' vajza, hulg za! *Cheers!*

Ya xutee ekunij'kuurma. *May I see a menu?*

Ya me yecti devilrat. *I do not eat devil rats.*

'oliiko ecena'xom? *How much does this cost?*

Bute xom s'und? *Is this genuine?*

Mo'ti ya upuuti xom van caarb me kulun? *Does this come in a color other than dirty?*

We'ax tu' epistl'ya? *Have you seen my pistol?*

Ak tu' ji'noo, me drundeah tu' san enorgoz'ya. *If you move, I will kill you with my weapon.*

Kaa'u ya gru kom Siyaatul? *How do I get back to Seattle?*

Drundeah 'om caaliah! *Geek the mage!*

Ya bledjeax. *I'm sorry.*

Ya me yumedi akaa kredstik. *I do not have any credsticks.*

Ak tu' me drundeah ya, tu' polu'e eyertz'ya. *If you do not kill me, you can have my money.*

Bi'ce ma'noo kom DokWagun. *Please call DocWagon.*

TROG ENEMIES

I have an honorable name, but that honor does not belong to me, it was earned by a great man. I was simply born to it by luck, but I want to bring it honor as well. And I want others to join me in this cause.

We live in dark times. Monsters roam our streets. They live among us, tainting our youth; they work among us, stealing our jobs; they bring violence to our city with their gangs; they make our streets unsafe with their random violence. It is an outrage that we must share this Earth with these monstrosities.

We must band together. We must not seek to live in submission. We must rise up and destroy this darkness. Band together, brothers and sisters of humanity, and rid this world of the monsters that live among us.

Free our future generations.

Bring peace.

Bring joy.

Bring Unity.

–Eric Brackhaven

- We can't talk about what makes us great unless we give a little bit of time to the obstacles we need to overcome. I'm not talking about the small things, like being too big or eating too much, I'm talking about those people who think that because we are who we are, we are less than everyone else. I'm looking at you, Humanis Policlub! And you, Alamos 20K! I'm talking about politicos like former Governor Kenneth Brackhaven, UCAS Senator Carter Banes, and Atlanta Mayor Sheila Martin. These are the groups and individuals who spend every waking hour trying to find another way to belittle the orks and trolls of the world through rhetoric and legislation based on fear and ignorance.

  If you don't know what these people are all about, or even if you think you do but could do to have a little more fuel for your own anti-hate agenda, keep reading. Because I've found some folks willing to lay it out and bring the shadows up to speed on what these groups are all about. We don't have to indulge in their rhetoric and hate-speech, but we can analyze the facts and take a hard look at their ideals.
- Bull

HUMANIS POLICLUB

POSTED BY: TARGOD

At the top of the list of the world's most well-known meta-haters is the Humanis Policlub. The name says it all, "Human is," as if being human is everything that matters in the world. The worst part about Humanis isn't their hate agenda, its how they deliver that agenda to the masses. On the surface, they simply promote being human. They offer programs and resources for people who are down on their luck, but it never goes to anyone with pointed ears. Up front, they'll smile and let anyone walk into the visitor area of a chapterhouse, treating even the burliest troll with a broad grin and an excess of smarminess and

charm. They can fill out paperwork for trogs to join or get started in a program, but the paperwork gets lost, the program is canceled, or there are "delays" in the processing that leave them in limbo. Really persistent metas eventually get a visit. Round one is usually just a little scare, maybe a light beating. Round two is almost always lethal. Accidents happen, random violence in the wrong part of town, that kind of thing. All enacted by members who have proven themselves to not just be pro-human, but anti-metahuman. Insofar as that distinction has meaning.

The HP weeds through their members with meetings, personal surveys, and side conversations to eventually discover who just thinks humans need a little help versus those that think metahumanity should have been squashed back in the teens. The deeper the hate runs, the higher up in the Humanis ranks someone can rise. All the while proving themselves through beatings, killings, and hate crimes.

The policlub itself is worldwide, with chapters in every major city in the world, except those in meta-friendly countries. In those places they operate completely from the shadows with the help of both the HP and another organization, the Human Nation, as well as hundreds of other policlubs with less-recognized names but the same unconscionable goals. I'll talk about the Human Nation later; as for the other policlubs, do a smattering of research and the overall beliefs will quickly reveal how they feel about any and all metatypes.

Each chapterhouse of the HP is like a single cell within a terrorist organization. They keep themselves separate by having their own leadership—and scapegoats—within each branch, but the higher up you go, the more intertwined they become. The everyday member knows nothing of their anti-metahuman agenda; they just get the pro-human side, until they are welcomed into the inner sanctum. Once they prove their belief, a much larger Humanis opens up, but that larger Humanis makes sure that members understand the need for secrecy and maintaining appearances for the rest of the world. They aren't a megacorp that can dictate what people believe; they're a policlub that gathers together those with similar beliefs and points them in the right direction.

Organization is a critical point of the organization. Each chapterhouse is a cell. Communication occurs up to the greater organization but is limited laterally. Sure, some of these good ol' boys (and gals) meet and talk, but they usually know better than to talk policlub business, or at least the illegal kind of business.

For us orks, this means institutionalized racism wherever these drekstains get their grubby little fingers. They push an agenda that keeps us from anything better than skag work where we can't make ends meet and get pushed, or kept, on the outskirts of society.

Why are there so many ork gangers and runners? Because at some point we want more than the leftovers and garbage we get fed and we need to take it ourselves because nobody's offering us any handouts. But these slitches are spreading their word about us and building the hate and fear through propaganda, slick pro-human marketing, and intentional racism that often instigates violence, because that's what many angry people do. They fight. And before you go and make some kind of comment about, "That's what simple or uncivilized people do," I'm going to warn you that for every simple act of violence, I can show a revolution of civilized folk who used violence to change their station and way of life.

Orks and trolls don't always think violence is the answer, but they are well-equipped to handle it, and hooplickers like the Humanis Policlub and their racist ilk make it easy to use without moral complications.

The main thing to know about this group is you *will* run into them. They have a presence in almost every reasonably inhabited part of the world, and they aren't shy in their activities. They spend every waking hour working to make trogs' lives more difficult, so sooner or later, that's going to affect you.

Universities and public forums are full of debate about the best way to handle them. Ignore them and hope they'll go away? Engage in preventative strikes and hope that for once, violence won't beget violence? Clearly, I don't have a simple answer. I can tell you this, though—individuals and communities often reach a point where they need to show what they stand for if they want to contain virulent hate, or someday eliminate it. You better be ready to take action when that point comes if you don't want to get steamrolled for good.

- Hate groups get weakened the same way any group gets weakened—when they lose leadership and they lose funding. That's why there are so many campaigns to expose corporate bigwigs who are funneling money to Humanis—shame them into stopping, and the lack of cash flow is going to have an effect. Hate is a lot more appealing when it's comfortable—when it's starving, it doesn't have nearly the allure.
- Snopes

HUMAN NATION

POSTED BY: TARGOD

Mentioned above, the Human Nation is a secret society of the most powerful meta-haters in the world. These are the folks behind mass genocide, mandated sterilization efforts, government destabilization in meta-friendly countries, and hundreds of other anti-metahuman efforts that aren't just about holding trogs down, but ridding the world of them. As a secret society, they aren't about open warfare or some kind of public purge. Instead, they work in the shadows through any of the hundreds of organizations their members are affiliated with, or the ones they have managed to gain control of.

These scuzzers aren't just after orks and trolls, but we're definitely a bigger focus than the halfers and dandies. The problem with going after them is that you always look like some conspiracy nut when you talk about groups like this. As if secret societies can't stay secret in this mega-information age. Information is all controlled by the megas, and these guys control the megas. More to the point, if we want to work against these moral catfish, we need to shine more light on the individuals involved, because the whole isn't going to crumble just because we bad-mouth them. With that method in mind, I offer up these first five sacrifices. Hit the shadows and start bringing them down. Anyone want more profiles, hit me up private and we can talk.

Altus Moorhead is currently heading up research on genomic specific viruses with Ares America. He's currently based in Detroit but ventures to several of Ares' most classified research facilities around the globe, including one located in the Redmond Barrens in the Seattle Metroplex. Prior to this, he worked for Transys-Neuronet, under the direct supervision of the dragon, but was extracted in '74. Rumor has it Celedyr found out he was HN affiliated, and Moorhead bolted before he could end up on the menu.

- Why didn't Celedyr share that information with Ares?
- Nephrine

- Who says he didn't? I'm not saying Ares endorses is pro-HN stance, but as long as he produces value for the corp, they'll look the other way. So if you're going to trash him, revealing his affiliation is not enough—you have to show how he might end up losing the corp more value than he creates.
- Cosmo

Davion Fender operates for the UCAS FBI. He performs all sorts of questionable activities, from fixing to hands-on wetwork, and uses his considerable network and black-ops budget to further the Nation's causes. His contempt for trolls and orks is evident in his hiring practices, and there's a single word etched into the barrel of his Ruger Super Warhawk: "Trogslayer."

Michael West works as a field trauma specialist for DocWagon, operating with their HTR units in particularly meta-heavy neighborhoods. He's well-known for targeting local civilians during extractions, and his survival and recovery ratings show a distinct variation between clients of the metahuman and human persuasion.

Linda Ann Shoiberg is a NeoNET executive who works out of their St. Louis office. She's going to be looking for a new boss soon, and this would be a great time to ruin her reputation as she tries to transition. Most corporate speculation has been on a smooth transition over to Spinrad, but word

on street is she'll encounter a whole lot of bumps if she tries to move in that direction. A lot of forces are working against that, groups that smart runners could work with to bring down Shoiberg while she's stretched thin trying to make a transition.

Caitlyn Clovus works for Evo. Yup, Evo. She's not even completely human. She SURGEd back in the early '60s and actually hides it from her HN compadres by doing all of her work via the Matrix. Remember when all those troll-modified rifles that Petrovski was using malfunctioned, leading to a bunch of injuries and deaths? That was her. She hacked the code for the production facility, implanted a manufacturing flaw, and covered up her tracks. Easy enough from the inside. She's a damn good hacker and has made sure to erase every bit of evidence that she's not fully human from the Matrix. She works off of a Yamatetsu Naval cruiser that Evo uses for biological research, so she has a great reason for no one to ever meet her in person.

- Want to move against Clovus? Be real careful about how you communicate your moves and plans. It won't be enough to just not mention her name—she has a lot of agents running complicated algorithms to see if she can detect any movement toward her by known Johnsons or runner teams. So you might need to go old school for some of your communications if you want to avoid giving her advance word of your plans.
- Netcat

PALADIN HEALTH AND MEDICAL GROUP

POSTED BY: TARGOD

This medical corporation is a puppet of the Human Nation. Runners in Manhattan and Denver have been part of some seriously unpleasant op-

erations involving Paladin that should have been worldwide news but in the end didn't even make more than a few conspiracy blogs. These were operations costing hundreds of millions of nuyen and affecting thousands of metahumans, but after being exposed by runners, Paladin did little more than transfer several key assets, disappear a few others, and silence the occasional news-hack looking to expose a major conspiracy. Which is a nice notion, but the problem is that the people behind these conspiracies control everything, and many members of the Human Nation have gained themselves quite powerful positions in pretty much every mega on the planet.

The problem for us is that these clinics, hospitals, doctor's offices, and medical research facilities have been opening up in cities all over the world. Every one of them is supported by the Paladin Health and Medical Group on paper, but that group itself is supported through philanthropic donations from megacorps, private citizens, and independent organizations. To add a full slap in the face, they have PR guys at both Aztechnology and Horizon boosting their reputation, thanks to several key HN members within those corps. While these clinics have been proven to engage in eugenics and genocide as far as the shadows are concerned, in mainstream culture Paladin doesn't even have a smudge of dirt on them.

Basic guideline for any meta out there: Avoid these places. The free healthcare they offer will be your death, or worse, the death of future generations. Runners, meta and human alike should burn this place. Maybe you can go easy on the lesser staff, but do a little digging in advance and you can find out just how many of these fraggers have HP memberships. They're complicit in some way with killing our kind. For them, frag mercy.

- One of Paladin's problems—from their point of view—is that their work is overly slow and narrowly focused. Sterilizing orks and trolls is great for limiting future generations, but it doesn't do much about the ones currently in front of you. Plus, they primarily affect the trogs who come into their clinics, meaning they can't do much to non-patients. Their research division is keen on changing this, which means they are very much looking into what kind of "final solutions" they can devise. If anyone needs to be stopped, it's the ones working on that.
- Thorn

- Finally, a Nazi comparison that isn't over-wrought.
- Pistons

ALAMOS 20K

POSTED BY: TYCHO

These psychos are most famous for wrecking the Sears Tower, which honestly didn't really help their cause because it gave ghouls a place to live and killed far more humans than metas, but no one ever said they were that bright. Since then, they've kept up the attack. They haven't pulled of anything quite so large, but I'll give them a point for their increase in focus if for no other reason than it means they aren't killing as many innocent civilians.

They've got the typical terrorist group cell-style organization. Individual groups are in charge of their own acts, but they receive the occasional orders from on high. The localized groups vary in how successful they are at mucking up life for us metas, but when they coordinate, nothing good comes of it.

Their current targets are the regulars—MoM and SoS meetings, meta-friendly stores and corps, as well as embassies for meta-friendly nations like the Tírs and Azania. But my sources in the shadows are saying they have a few more interesting targets in mind. So, thanks for letting me drop this info here on what those targets may be. Let's stop the attacks before they happen, and then make these fraggers pay.

Seattle Underground: I know, big place, but they are literally targeting the whole thing. They're gathering plans and layouts of the whole place and looking for the best few spots to hit to bring it down, or the best place to release a toxin that will wipe out as many residents as possible. It's a huge undertaking, and I haven't heard a timeframe, but I know a lot of runners are being hired for jobs in the Underground and being asked to wear monitors that map every place they go. Alongside those, Renraku hosts are getting hit for the engineering data they're gathering on the Underground as they try to make it safer now that it's its own district.

- I've been contacted by a half dozen Mr. Johnsons looking for strange stuff that may have to do with this. Water access to the Underground, submersible and diving trips to run tests along the shore downtown on the down-low. Suffice it to say, Tycho's not making this up.
- Sounder

ACHE: The former Renraku Arcology is another Seattle target that's being scoped. Now that a lot of it acts as low-income housing for the city, it's becoming heavily populated with metas, particularly

orks and trolls. Several sections of the arcology are being modified for the bulkier inhabitants, by the bulkier inhabitants (and some dwarves), but not with authorization from the metroplex. The ACHE is a massive patch of the Wild West in the heart of downtown, serving mostly as a cage for everyone inside, but the metroplex still wouldn't be keen on the place being restructured without professional help. Those reconstructed and possibly-not-up-to-code areas are on the agenda for some attention from these racist fragsacks.

- I'd worry about the ACHE if I didn't know the crazy fraggers who live inside that place. Half of 'em are so feral they'd probably smell trouble coming. I've try to get into and around that place for legitimate runs, and it's not easy. Alamos nutbags got no chance.
- Mika

Hoodville: The Chicago CZ seems like an odd place to hit, but this little patch has been growing for years. It was started by a runner named Hood—a smoothie, but a good one. It's a haven for the downtrodden, and Hood used a lot of ork muscle to get it started. That attracted more orks, especially ones who didn't like the violent life of the Horde, which sadly has finally attracted the attention of the Alamos fraggers. They've had plenty of troubles and threats over the past two years, so they aren't soft targets, but they are the kind of place that Alamos can go after in a very loud and flashy way.

- For those interested in this kind of thing, Hoodville has a hacker school, or should I say sk001, run by a troll decker name of 3D. He joined Hood's crew early on and took to the city like a fish to water. Even made himself some powerful enemies.
- Bull

Truman Tower: Can you tell where I spend a lot of my time? The tower has been back up and running for years. Truman's people got back in almost as fast as Ares in order to regain control of their megatower in the Core. The thing about targeting this one is that it would give them the kind of notoriety they gained from bringing down the Sears Tower and then some. With the tower peaking out at over 1,400 meters, if Alamos can bring it down like they did the Sears, they'll wreck the Core and wipe out the rebuilding process in Chicago.

- Any tower down there that gets hit would bring the whole place down. Not because they'd fall like dominoes, but because a falling building would trash the lower levels and choke out all the people who actually work up above.
- 2XL

- Hence the attack on the tower. They don't care about Truman, but they can wipe out the metas who live below by kicking over this corporate giant.
- Glitch

- Considering there are still probably hives down there, it's not that big a loss. Bug City needs to just be written off. Like Boston. No one's trying to open that mess back up. They should have left Chicago the same way.
- Clockwork

- Except people are, in fact, pushing to re-open Boston. Might even happen by the end of the year. Could be time for you to get caught up on the situation over there.
- Snopes

KENNETH BRACKHAVEN

POSTED BY: BULLSEYE

Some jobs are just too good to be true. Bull tapped me to dig into and keep some tabs on Kenny B as he fled Seattle with his tail between his legs. This was like a dream come true. Working for a real legend, bringing him back some great news, and maybe getting a shot at some more work in the big leagues. Well, here's to hoping it's the efforts and not the results that matter.

Brackhaven slipped out of Seattle with all but one of his properties on the market or sold, his portfolio heavily liquidated, and rumors of some seriously secure new cribs all over the Carib League. I followed along—it's not hard, he has quite the entourage and security detail everywhere he goes. Almost like he knows he's a dirtbag piece of drek who people would love to see dead.

Sorry, you want info, not editorial.

He made a few stops. Chicago, DeeCee, Manhattan, Atlanta, Miami, and then cruised out on his new yacht, a fragging Blohm & Voss Neo 111. I managed to get a team of runners to drop a tag on him and sat-tracked it out to Acklins Island. His boat has moved around the Carib, but he's been primarily operating out of his compound on Acklins. The problem is, physical location means squat these days, and Brackhaven managed to purchase his own geostationary satellite before departing. He and his electronic

specialists used that sat to get back to the grids of the real world.

Safe on his secluded island (sorry, no volcano), Brackhaven is using his immense liquid wealth and ever-growing investment income to make the lives of meta-friendly powers all over the world a living hell.

Let me clue you in about some of his modus operandi these days. Remember that he's clear of any need to act like he's anything other than himself. He can indulge his darkest impulse. So: Remember that mugger that hit you up recently, Bull? The one with no tech on his person? You thought he was a bum, but he managed to get the drop on you. Tagged you with a trio of zappers, one of which happened to hit your deck and fry it despite the fact that it looks like nothing special. That was Brackhaven. Or at least, one of his people. As if he'd stoop to touching a trog himself.

- Frag. I missed the connection. Still working on tweaking a new rig, but that's no excuse. Thanks, Bullseye.
- Bull

Bull's not alone in getting targeted. He's been messing with Dana Oaks thanks to her support for Prop 23 and the Underground; Gary Gray for pushing trolls into the spotlight as non-monsters; former Senator Samantha Payne for reasons I'm not quite sure of; half the princes of the Tír, likely for just being elves; and a copious number of others that it makes me wonder if he's trying to see how many he can piss off and take on.

Thing is, he's doing it slick. Nothing overt. He's masking his hirings, bouncing everything through shells and proxies, and doing a damn good job of it. Only reason I've been able to gather this much is the tag I pinged him with gave me a few months of access to his local system on the island. I spent a few months in a less-than-comfortable sardine can surfacing at night to hack in and then dipping down and rolling out at night to keep from getting spotted. Came close once when I didn't notice his Neo 111 blazing home from Miami.

- He's using Humanis a lot, but worse is his access to The Flaming Sword, which is The Human Nation's elite goon squad. Professional psychopaths and killers every one of them.
- Balladeer

UCAS SENATOR CARTER BANES

POSTED BY: BROOKS CANE

When it comes to politicians, sometimes it's really hard to tell the difference between being racist, supporting racists, or simply being overly ambitious with ideas that, while they think they're great and super beneficial, they're really just promoting racism in disguise.

That's not Banes. He's completely aware of his racist nature, though no one else seems to be. He plays at the ambitious type, and he veils his racist agenda in some of the most beneficial-sounding bills and proposals in the Senate. He doesn't even hide his plans to create troll reservations in the fine print of some other bill; instead he puts it right out there and just paints it as an amazing, picturesque place that is built for trolls to fit in and feel at home.

While some people scream out across the Matrix or shout from the highest tower that this is just like what happened to the Native Americans, they get quickly silenced. Mostly by others who point out the Natives' current state and use it to invalidate any concerns. Or, more often, the UCAS sysops or black baggers come along and wipe the dissension from their shadows. Words in this world only carry so much weight.

This issue isn't the only one on his agenda, and he runs a lot of black-book operations in order to keep his bills and his concerns at the top of the screamsheet feed. Efforts to offer extensive incentives to corporate prisons in order to lease out their inmates, which contain a disproportionate amount of orks, for work programs have already seen success. Problem is, no one read the fine print, or at least no one cared that it also offered up subjects for medical testing in exchange for sentence reductions. Plenty of unwitting orks saw a chance to get back out to their families and signed up. Then, on the inside, these prisoners were targeted for violations that tacked on time to their sentence. Which often didn't matter because the medical testing usually left them sick, dying, or dead. It's all put together under the table by Bates and his administration and then executed with shadowrunners and HP lackeys that inhabit both sides of the penal structure. It's still going on. No one hears the pleas of the inmates, except their poor families, that were usually the reason for their lucrative criminal activities, and nothing seems to be changing.

- If you don't know who is in charge of this medical testing, you haven't read the whole download.
- Butch

- I hate Bates. But I hate those who side with Bates or blindly follow him even more. You need votes to get bills through, and votes come your way through political maneuvering or getting dirt on your fellow politicians to shove them in the right direction. Bates is a master of this. He stages most of it, but politicians, especially the younger ones, just walk right into his plots. We do most of the work for him, too. Often getting double-crossed, or sent up the river, or tossed into the river, for our services.
- Mihoshi Oni

- Money rules the shadows. We're here for that lucrative criminal income he's on about. I know many here on JackPoint have squirreled away enough to pick and choose, or have gotten to the point where they can play the high-and-mighty card, but most of us in the shadows still need to pay our bills and take whatever job Johnson offers.
- Chainmaker

I'm a solutions guy as well, so I'll offer some ideas on how to get rid of Banes. I've got three.

One, prevent his re-election. This is a multi-part plan. His constituents need to really get to know this guy. We see and hear all the mudslinging that goes on during elections, but all of that is still moderated to a point. We in the shadows don't need to filter what we deliver to the voting public. Nor are we really forced to verify our sources. Or even tell the truth. A smear campaign across the public grid in Iowa, or even the state's grid (it's not much better than the public one) would be a good start, though some convincing dirt to sling might need to be gathered or imagined beforehand. The second part is the tougher one. Banes has run basically unopposed for several terms. He needs competition. There are plenty of politicians who want a crack at his seat—they just need a little shadow assistance getting the dirt on opponents so they can get the nod to run against Banes. Another part is dealing with Banes support structure. He's got a lot of dirt on folks. We need to clean up or gain access to his dirt collection and help his enemies or burn them, so they in turn burn him.

Suggestion two connects with the last aspect of part one. Get access to the dirt he has on his fellow senators, and either help them mitigate the damage from the info, or light everyone up and pin the leaks on Banes. There is a lot of money to be made in the shadows of DeeCee if you are willing to burn a bunch of it at the end to get a new life. DeeCee is full of a bunch of guys holding dirt on everyone else. Spew it all onto the Matrix, and not only will you burn the politicians, but you'll burn your rep. Though in the process you're going to start a whole new shadow war between all the up and comers, so business after that will be great for your fellow runners.

I side-tracked myself a little there. Let's wrap up idea number three on this note: Help all of those other senators that Banes had in his pocket get some leverage on Banes, and the balance of power will shift. They'll no longer be politically motivated to help his racist agendas. Make sure you target the right ones. Some are just as racist as Banes and will vote the same way he does on bills that hurt metahumans. Best targets are senators with big-city connections. These are the ones that usually have a worldlier view of things, a view that probably came with the acquisition of abundant skeletons in their closets. Good thing is, we're looking to help with that in order to get rid of this racist sack of drek.

ATLANTA MAYOR SHEILA MARTIN

POSTED BY: ORKLANTA

While a lot of people in the world kept a focus on Brackhaven—a presidential run will do that—Mayor Sheila Martin has been just as good at cleaning up the racial balance of her city without all the publicity. There's even a small part of me that could call her a hero for our people thanks to the success of Sweetwater Creek. The problem is, we made that a success only after she pushed everyone out that way to die. It was a lucky side effect for us, not her intention. She wanted another ghetto to send in the jack-boots, but that's hard to do when Sweetwater actually contracts another security company to police them.

Mayor Martin is best known in Atlanta for her efforts to promote orks and trolls to leave the city proper. It's not like she posts signs that say "Trogs Get Out!" but it worked out the same. Much of her efforts come to fruition through taxes and zoning requirements that inhibit the bulkier metatypes from owning property or being allowed into establishments because the owners aren't willing to eat the expense for getting zoned for "atypical

metahuman body structure and mass variations" in their construction and design. All of this is portrayed as being for the safety of the orks and trolls, but it's used to get them out—or not let them in. I'd love to claim that not everyone who follows these rules and laws are actively trying to keep out or push out trogs, but really they are. There are plenty of ways around the rule, the easiest being a grandfather clause to allow operation outside those rules, but no one uses it or even tries.

- That's because looking into those options gets a giant bullseye painted on you. Hate groups come a knockin', and the remodels they perform may not help the building much while also earning the owner a hefty hospital bill.
- Balladeer

- Don't blame it all on hate groups. A lot of runners use those outfits as scapegoats to cover their tracks.
- Clockwork

- Not getting up to their bulldrek code is also no reason to keep out orks and trolls because of Sweetwater Construction. This troll-and-ork construction corp is small, but they operate cheap, especially when it comes to bringing buildings up to code.
- Bull

- Which is because they steal most of their construction materials, and their guys have no problem working cheap in order to stick it to the mayor and her racist cronies.
- 0rkCE0

This problem has a cure, and I don't mean everyone moving out to Sweetwater, because that's already a hot zone for trouble. The solution here is simple, but it needs some really complex and skilled help to get it done. Someone needs to dig up and reveal the mayor's connections to the Human Nation. We already have several Paladin facilities, all with political ties to Mayor Martin, around Atlanta, so you know she's connected to their corrupt, meta-hating hoops. But we know that's not enough.

We need some serious digging and surveillance help from folks with top-notch skills. That's part of the reason I agreed to do this little write-up. Because I knew it would get out to folks with the skills needed and maybe with an inclination to take a shadowcation to Atlanta for some work. We have plenty of metahumanitarian philanthropists willing to fund this; we just need runners with the salt to pull it off.

- As a side point, those runners should probably be human. Makes it a lot easier to avoid being noticed around Mayor Martin. Her entourage isn't very diverse and her security has no desire for diversity in her presence.
- Bull

- Yeah, no. Ain't no humans riding in to save the day. This is a trog cause, should be trog-led. I'm sure we'll need to use some humans in certain roles, but most of us have long experience in knowing how to deal with people who hate us on sight. It's our fight. We should be the ones to take it on.
- 2XL

SAFE COMMUNITIES ORGANIZING PROJECT

POSTED BY: SUNSHINE

We've covered some of the obvious enemies so far—now it's time to dig into something a little more subtle, an organization so skilled in using coded languages and dog whistles that many members don't think the organization has anything to do with race at all. And they certainly don't consider themselves to be racists. The Safe Communities Organizing Project—usually referred to as SCOPe—started as a community-based organization in Minneapolis-St. Paul, and for the first decade or so of its existence, it remained a benign and fairly mild-mannered force in the MSP sprawl. Then, in 2071, Don Marco "Fat Cat" Catarone was finally taken out by one of his rivals—a tough-minded tusker named Sturk Elgin. Problem was, while Elgin had enough guts to take out Catarone, he didn't have the skills to lead the mob the way Catarone had, and a lot of operations spiraled out of control. There were insurgencies left and right, competitors who were no longer scared of the mob, and all sorts of thievery, lying, and treachery. Elgin and his primary competitors tried to regain control the only way they knew how—by smashing the heads of troublemakers. This rash of violence unsettled the residents of the city, and SCOPe rose up to take a more prominent voice in anti-violence efforts. Then two developments changed the organization forever—they received a major, long-term grant from the Alliance Foundation, and the size of the grant made them bring in new leadership in the form of former Ares executive Brenda Corenweil.

- Not for nothing, but the Alliance Foundation's endowment is managed by—drumroll—Brackhaven Investments.
- Cosmo

Cornweil saw this new investment as a ticket to bigger and better things, and word is she also made a direct connection between the violence in MSP and trogs, as it was an ork who started and then nurtured the unrest. She used the infusion of cash to open new chapters, starting in the Midwest—Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee—then moving eastward to Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia. She simplified the organization's core message to "Building Safety, Preserving People," and focused on the concept of establishing safe neighborhoods one block at a time. In each city SCOPe worked in, they would find a starting point, of a few square blocks, take measures to enhance safety, then keep building outward from that starting point to make larger safe spots. The is a decently well-established playbook for this sort of thing—push owners of vacant properties to sell, use rotating loan funds to build and redevelop housing, encourage lots of outdoor activities by residents, that sort of thing—but observers in multiple cities noticed problematic elements to SCOPe's implementation of some of these ideas. They often spoke about removing the "problem element" from neighborhoods, and while this mainly included those with criminal records, they would also work to evict some people who were far behind on rent payments to get more reliable tenants. Thing was, if you were human, dwarf, or elf, they often managed to look past rent indiscretions. Trogs, on the other hand, received no forgiveness.

Plus, SCOPe's public comments and press releases started using a whole lot more coded language. "Criminal element" is one thing—everyone recognizes what that term is, and who wants that in their neighborhood? Besides us, I mean. But they started talking more about "keeping our neighborhoods safe from those who lean toward crime," or "criminals and potential criminals." When pressed about that last term, they'll talk about people with low income, poor educational options, and negative social pressures—that is, those whose profiles make them more likely to be involved in crime. But in practice, when used by SCOPe, it almost always refers to orks and trolls. Confront members of the organizations with this fact, and they'll deny it, saying the term refers to anyone in those circumstances, and besides, so what if it covers a lot of orks and trolls? It's not inherently negative. They just want to help these individuals improve their situation. Better neighborhoods with better social pressures mean fewer potential criminals, right? But then they'll focus on a new block, look at removing the potential criminal element, and a few more orks and trolls will find themselves out on their hoop, sometimes just for the crime of being short on cash while having tusks and/or horns.

So while they might not recognize what they are doing, and they certainly wouldn't accept the label of "trog enemy," SCOPe is an organization with a multi-million-nuyen budget who comes into neighborhoods and steadily removes the trogs from them. And they do it with a smile.

- Yeah, they're almost unfailingly nice and polite, but with that tense smile you see sometimes, you know? They'll chat you up and shake your hand, but all the while they are making sure they know where you are in relation to their children, and they're gathering tension in their shoulders that they didn't know was there until they abruptly slump those shoulders as you walk away.
- Snopes

TROG RUNNERS

POSTED BY: SUNSHINE

When I was asked to talk about and interview trolls and orks in the shadows, I couldn't resist. Everyone remembers the glamorous and pretty. Orks and trolls are anything but glamorous and pretty. Therefore, they're often overlooked and forgotten.

There are exceptions. Neil the Ork Barbarian was a big hit who made a fortune for several different actors over the years. In the shadows, it's the same way. Everyone talks about the elves and dragons, because people who are powerful are revered and feared. The elegant speakers and the charismatic are remembered, while those in the trenches are often ignored. For this post, I want to focus on the orks and trolls who have made a name for themselves. And we're going in-depth here, beyond the public information you can find anywhere. We'll take a look at how they got where they are, so you really learn who they are and why they made it. However, for every person like Bull or Beaker who is well-known, or at least well-known in the shadows, there are several others who have risen above the masses, even if they haven't gotten the same kind of attention yet. I'm going to do my part to overcome that injustice and get them the attention they deserve. Let's start with some of the names you've likely at least heard before. I hope the information is helpful and insightful.

CHARACTER STATS

Note that two sets of character stats are included for most characters in this session—one for *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition*, and one for *Shadowrun: Anarchy*.

2XL

The troll smuggler is more than just muscle and horns, though this is how he portrays himself until you get to know him. He is charming, talkative, and has a good sense of humor.

- 2XL is talkative? I think you've been riding too much jazz, Sunshine.
- Netcat

- I spoke to several of his contacts and they say once you get to know him, he opens up. Hell, look at how much he's posted here. Get him on something he cares about, and he's full of information.
- Sunshine

When he breaks out the charm, he uses it to put people at ease and make them believe he has their best interests at heart. He's a born leader. In talking with him, it became evident that he has an anti-human bias; however, he's also a smart businessman and realizes he can't let this affect what he does. I don't know if this attitude is the result of a specific event, or if years of being looked at as the big, dumb trog has made him feel that way.

- Oh, good. Let's open the door for amateur psychoanalysis. How about this: I have the same strain of tribalism that every sentient being ever has had, but like the better ones, I work to minimize it. Simple enough, right?
- 2XL

2XL runs guns, drugs, or anything else that will turn a profit, with a focus on working throughout Western Europe. Last known to be living in Lisbon, Portugal, he maintains a network of contacts throughout Western Europe and the Mediterranean. Of course, it helps that he speaks most of the languages.

- Anyone can slot a chip and speak the language. This isn't a big deal.
- Slamm-0!

- He speaks them without a chip, though. Not sure if it's because he learned them young and is now capitalizing on it, or because he went to the effort so he could make sure he still had his knowledge in case cyberware went haywire. Impressive either way, I figure.
- Sunshine

He speaks the local language to put people at ease and blend in—at least as much as a troll ever can. He got his start working the docks throughout the Italian Confederation, and from that he moved on to driving trucks into France and Switzerland for the Italian Mafia. It was dangerous, but he thought the pay was worth the risk. Soon, he was working contacts and developing his own network, expanding the influence of his Don. It didn't take long before he was running the operation in Spain and western France. He grew the network and was running guns for neo-anarchists throughout Europe when a hacker working for him sold him out to Interpol. He barely escaped the trap set for him and went to ground for a while, though he had one piece of business to take care of first. The man who sold him out was found dead a couple days later, his tongue cut out and missing.

- A typical Mafia response. 2XL might not have had anything to do with it other than passing on info about who might have blown his cover.
- Traveler Jones

2XL continues to work for the Mafia, and he has connections throughout the continent. He doesn't do as much of the actual smuggling himself any more, concentrating more on pulling the strings and coordinating the smuggling operation from a distance. He'll step in and do it himself when needed, but he's getting older (aren't we all?) and at this point prefers to let others do the majority of the work for him.

- That's his cover story. He claims to be semi-retired, but I still see him doing plenty of work.
- Traveler Jones

- I get to pick and choose what I work on, so I choose the good stuff. And I don't talk about that stuff much, because I'm not an idiot.
- 2XL

2XL

MALE TROLL

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
9	4	5(7)	10	5	3	3	4	3.4	3

Initiative	9 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	13/11
Limits	Physical 12, Mental 5, Social 6
Armor	12
Active Skills	Automatics 5, Automotive Mechanic 5, Blades 8, Clubs 7, Computer 4, Con 8, Demolitions 4, Disguise 4, Electronic Warfare 3, Etiquette 10, First Aid 6, Forgery 5, Gunnery 5, Gymnastics 4, Heavy Weapons 5, Leadership 5, Negotiation 10, Perception 9, Performance 4, Pilot Aircraft 4, Pilot Ground Vehicle 8, Pistol 6, Unarmed Combat 6
Knowledge Skills	Border Procedures 6, Customs 6, Smuggling Routes 7
Languages	Italian N, French N, German 5, Spanish 7, Portuguese 7
Qualities	Bilingual, First Impression, Magical Resistance 2, Prejudice (Humans, Biased), SIN (criminal)
Augmentations	Control rig 2 (alpha), reaction enhancers 2, simrig, smartlink, tailored pheromones 2
Gear	Armored jacket, GMC Bulldog van, 3 stim patches, fake SIN (rating 6), Transys Avalon
Vehicles	GMC Bulldog (Ground Craft, Handl 3/3, Speed 3, Accel 1, Bod 16, Armor 12, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 6)
Weapons	Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5(7), DV 11P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), w/ regular ammo] Grenade launcher [Acc 4(6), DV 16P, AP –2, SS, RC —, 6(c) w/ high explosive grenades] Katana [Sword, Acc 7, Reach 1, DV 13P, AP –3]

2XL

MALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
10	4	5	3	4	3

Condition Monitor	13
Armor	12
Skills	Close Combat 2 + A, Con 5 + C, Negotiation 5 + C, Piloting Ground 3+ A, Firearms 4 + A, Smuggling Routes (K)
Shadow Amps	Essence 2.5 Tailored Pheromones (Bioware. Reroll 1 die on all in person charisma based rolls, –0.5 essence) Control Rig 3 (Cyberware. Control vehicles by VR, +1 die vehicle rolls, reroll 3 dice, –2 essence) Reaction Enhancers (Cyberware, +1 Plot point at beginning of combat, –1 Essence) I Know Everybody (Social. Add CHA rating contacts)
Qualities	Street Racer, Silver Tongue, SINer (Criminal)
Gear	Armored jacket, fake SIN, mechanic toolkit, medkit, GMC Bulldog [A 12, D 16], Transys Avalon
Weapons	Ares Alpha [DV 8P, Close OK, Near OK, Far –2] Katana [DV 13P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

CLOCKWORK

Growing up as a minority of one, this hobgoblin hacker knows how difficult being different can be. Not only was he the only hobgoblin in both his family and his neighborhood, but he wasn't like most orks he knew in other ways as well. He was fascinated by the Matrix, science, and technology, not guns and Urban Brawl games like the others. Most of his peers ridiculed him, since he was different and didn't enjoy what they did.

That all changed when the gang that ran in the area, the Nomads, noticed and recruited him. For once, he felt like he belonged. He quickly made himself useful to the Nomads in a number of ways, including providing overwatch for the gang as they ran drugs and helping them them break into the stash house of one of their chief rivals, the Hombres, an all-human Hispanic gang. He easily defeated their Matrix security and maglocks, and the advantage of surprise they had made the attack gratifyingly simple. The only problem was, the Hombres quickly figured out that the Nomads were behind the raid and retaliated by killing most of the gang and running off the rest. At that point, Clockwork knew he had no future there and left town before the Hombres caught up with him.

He moved from place to place, doing odd jobs and honing his hacking skills. Soon he was noticed by a group of runners who needed a new decker, as they had just lost theirs. They bought him a cutting-edge deck with the agreement that he would pay them back out of his cut of the jobs they did. Before long, he started working on personalized mini drones he now uses for surveillance, and he started dabbling at being a rigger.

After a decade of running together, the group disbanded following a particularly rough run that left one dead and two seriously wounded. The group's mage, Kit Kat, accused Clockwork of having sold the group out. There was never any hard evidence of it, but she was—and remains—adamant. This made it impossible for him to find work in the area. He started freelancing as a surveillance specialist and once again began moving around.

Right about that time, the Emergence happened, and Clockwork immediately developed a prejudice against technomancers.

- "Prejudice"? He's an all-out bigot against technomancers. He's threatened my life more than once, and when he heard that MCT was looking for "test" subjects, he started working to bring them some. FastJack and I have gone around several times about how deep his bigotry is, and why he still has a place here despite it.
- Netcat

- Because I'm good, and I know things. 'Jack knew that those are the only two qualifications that matter.
- Clockwork

He's also been doing some bounty hunting, especially for what he deems as "freaks of nature." He knows a lot about vehicles, especially drones, and is constantly working to stay on the cutting edge. It was while doing some of this research that he came to the attention of the legendary FastJack, who invited him as a guest poster to weigh in about a new technology and point out the advantages and flaws of new RFID technologies. It wasn't long before he was posting regularly about different technologies and science.

Clockwork still runs the shadows and has made some enemies, but so far he has managed to stay at least one step ahead of them. As with technomancers, he is very vocal in his hatred of head cases. He has openly admitted to fulfilling bounties for MCT to get them head case patients for study.

- And you know what? Lots of people see me as a hero for those efforts, because the threat the head cases offer is tangible. If I were you, I'd get on board and see me as a hero because of my attitude about technomancers, too,

because that threat will eventually make itself clear. It's better to be right sooner rather than later.

- Clockwork

- "I may be right about one thing, therefore I'm probably right about another, separate thing" is an argument with no intellectual foundation.
- Winterhawk

- I guess that's more eloquent than the "fuck you" I was going to type.
- Netcat

CLOCKWORK

MALE HOBGOBLIN

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
6	4	5	7	4	6	4	3	2.8	5

Initiative	9 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 9, Mental 5(8), Social 4
Armor	12
Active Skills	Aeronautics Mechanic 4, Armorer 5, Automatics 5, Automotive Mechanic, Blades 3, Computer 9, Con 4, Cybercombat 7, Demolitions 5, Disguise 4, Electronic Warfare 8, First Aid 6, Gunnery 7, Gymnastics 6, Hacking 11, Hardware 9, Locksmith 4, Negotiation 3, Perception 9, Pilot Aircraft 7, Pilot Ground Vehicle 8, Pistol 6, Sneaking 3, Software 8, Throwing Weapons 5, Tracking 6
Knowledge Skills	Auto Models 5, Chemistry 3, Drone Manufacturers 4, Matrix Security 6, Physics 5, Software Developers 5, UCAS Politics 3
Languages	English N (Cityspeak +2)
Qualities	Analytical Mind, Jurygrigger, Prejudice (technomancers, radical)
Augmentations	Cerebral booster 3, control rig 2 (betaware), math SPU, simrig, smartlink
Gear	Armored jacket, automotive toolkit, electronics toolkit, fake SIN (Rating 6), Fairlight Caliban, Shaiwese Cyber-5 (8 7 6 5), Programs (Armor, Baby Monitor, Biofeedback Filter, Browse, Edit, Encryption, Hammer, Signal Scrub, Toolbox, Wrapper), MCT Drone Web
Vehicles	Eurocar Westwind 3000 (Ground Craft, Handl 6/4, Speed 7, Accel 3, Bod 10, Armor 8, Pilot 3, Sensor 5, Seats 2) Lockheed Optic-X2 (Small Drone, Handl 4, Speed 4, Accel 1, Bod 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) 4 x MCT Fly-Spy (Minidrone, Handl 4, Speed 3, Accel 2, Body 1, Armor 0, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) Toyota Gopher (Ground Craft, Handl 5/5, Speed 4, Accel 2, Bod 14, Armor 10, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 3)
Weapons	AK-97 [Assault Rifle, Acc 5, 10P, AP –4, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 38(c), w/ APDS ammo smartlink] Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo]

CLOCKWORK

MALE HOBGOBLIN

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
7	3	2	5	3	4

Condition Monitor	11/10
Armor	9
Skills	Hacking 5 + L, Piloting (Ground) 4 + A, Piloting (other) 4 + A, Electronics 5 + L, Engineering 4 + L, Tracking 4 +L
Shadow Amps	Essence 4 MCT Fly-spy Aerial Drone (drone, +2 dice to perception test) Control Rig 2 (Cyberware. Control vehicle in VR, +1 die to vehicle actions, reroll 2 dice vehicle actions, –2 Essence) Cyberdeck 2 (Cyberware. Reroll 1 die on Matrix actions, Firewall +2, Matrix Condition Monitor 9, may run 1 program) Exploit (Program. Reroll 2 dice on non-cybercombat Matrix action)
Qualities	Codeslinger, Hawkeye, Emotional Attachment (dislike of technomancers)
Gear	MCT Blue defender, Toyota Gopher Truck [A 9, D 14], Fairlight Caliban, fake SIN
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —]

WILLIAM "BULL" MACCALLISTER

Do I really need to intro this guy? For a long time his tag line was "The best ork decker you've never met," but we've all met him. We function under his benevolent dictatorship, with him playing bad cop to Glitch's good cop and Slamm-0!'s chaos cop, if that's a thing. So rather than skim the surface of the man, let's get info straight from his mouth, in the form of a recent conversation I had with him.

Sunshine: Thanks for agreeing to this interview. I appreciate your time.

Bull: Well, I couldn't hide behind being the new guy like I tried to when FastJack did the *Street Legends* file.

Sunshine: No, not since you're now one of the moderators. Why don't you start from the beginning?

Bull: Okay. But only a sketch, since no one needs to know all the details. My parents were killed by Alamos 20,000 in the attack on the Sears Tower in 2039. Everyone thought I was dead, too. When you don't have an active SIN, no one knows you're alive. I was human at that point. When I goblinized

a few years later, I found out that life could get worse. No one is as mean as teenage orphans. I had to figure out at a pretty young age how to rely on myself, and what I was going to do to survive. It became clear pretty quickly that I had no future in corporate society. It was either become a criminal or become Batman. I didn't have a fortune and look I silly in tights, so my choice was kind of made for me.

Sunshine: So you started on a path that took you into the shadows.

Bull: It all started on the streets of Chicago, before it became Bug City. Me and my crew were running the shadows and failing or fragging up as much as we succeeded. Our reputation was mediocre at best. Things all changed with "the video," which still wasn't our best moment, but it got us known. We pissed off a bad guy, Kyle Morgan, when I hacked his slush fund and then tried to frame him for the theft to Aztechnology, who was funding his operation. He decided to get even by kidnapping friends and family and recording it on trideo.

- That's total trid villain stuff. I guess if it's effective, you don't worry so much about it being cliché
- /dev/grrl

- Yeah, we had more pressing things on our minds than whether his artistic cred was up to snuff.
- Bull

On top of this, we had to solve riddles to track down and save them while at the same time dodging death traps.

We didn't know it was happening, but some of the footage of us tackling this problem got out, and some people who matter saw it. It did more for our rep than the whole year of running we had done up until then. A couple years later, someone released a series of games portraying our runs. We got some minor-league fame, which is both a blessing and a curse. People come looking for you—sometimes to hire you, sometimes to challenge you, sometimes to try to arrest you.

Not long after that, Bug City happened, and we all had to run for our lives. We didn't get out initially, so we ended up trapped inside the CZ. Eventually, we managed to find a way out—it took us a year to get us and our families safe, but we made it. Or most of us did at least. After that, I moved around. I was active with Shadowland and made contacts throughout the shadow community. Then the deal with the devil caught up to us. Some of my team, including Johnny, died. It was time to cash out. I took my family and we moved out of the city. Life was a dream. When FastJack first came calling about this VPN he was setting up, I told him I wasn't interested.

- I'm not surprised. If you're not going to be using the information posted here, why bother with it? It would just be a hassle.
- Dr. Spin

- But 'Jack had to know that. I'm surprised he didn't have a better sales pitch ready right off the bat. I don't think he would have thought Bull would join out of altruism or anything.
- Slamm-0!

Then my kids—Rebecca and William Jr., who were the focus of my life—wanted to move to Seattle. Reba wanted to go to the University of Washington. Billy wanted to follow in my footsteps, and Seattle was the place to prove yourself. The dream quickly shattered when Reba was killed by the Mayan Cutter copycat. Killed in the Ork Underground, even. The talent I recruited found him and brought him to me, and I let my wife pull the trigger. After that, I got involved with the Orks Rights Committee and their fight to get the Ork Underground recognized as a district in Seattle. Not as involved as some people would have liked, but involved.

- Bull for governor!!!
- Slamm-0!

- No. Still no. Not ever.
- Bull

I did it in honor of Reba. She was so giving of her time for any cause and was especially passionate about ork rights and the recognition of the Ork Underground.

Sunshine: At some point you had a change of heart and signed up to JackPoint. You even are one of the admins. What changed your mind?

Bull: Billy being in the biz, maybe. I don't know. I couldn't run still, but I started working forming contacts. I wanted to be able to look out for the kid. At least until he supplants me as the best ork decker around, which might be sooner than I'd like to admit. And I'm setting up runs for other people, too, so it's good to keep my ear to the ground.

Sunshine: What's next?

Bull: Being one of the admins on JackPoint takes up a lot of my time. Especially when one of the other admins acts about as mature and focused as a gnat sometimes.

- I know way more baseball stats than any gnat you've ever met.
- Slamm-0!

Sunshine: Let's talk a little about the primary subject at hand—being a trog. First, how do you feel about that word?

Bull: I've never had a problem with taking something that was thrown at me and shoving it right back in the aggressor's face.

Sunshine: Was that one of the reasons for your "best ork decker you've never met" tagline?

Bull: Damn straight. I wanted it out there, front and center, that I'm an ork. If you were going to have a problem with it, then let me know as soon as you see the tagline. I guess I shouldn't be surprised at the number of people who *did* let me know, especially in the early days. It was kind of amazing how comfortable people felt about telling you that orks couldn't be good deckers.

Sunshine: How much fun did you have proving them wrong?

Bull: So much fun. Look, one of the secrets of decking—or maybe it's not really a secret—is that it's just about the best profession for people who want to get revenge. Yeah, street sammies can go and punch people in the face, but bruises fade and people recover. When you're a decker, you can go for the quick-and-easy revenge of frying a commlink or something, or you can have more fun. You can dig up personal dirt on people and share it with those they would least like to see it. You can ruin their credit. You can impersonate them online in all sorts of ways. You can keep tormenting them for years, decades after they first crossed you. You can make sure they never forget the lesson they should have learned early.

Sunshine: All of this doesn't sound hypothetical. Are there people from your early days as a decker that you're still teaching lessons to?

Bull: Only the really obnoxious ones.

- There's likely more detailed analysis to be done about the merits of putting your metatype in people's face and making them deal with it versus showing what you can do and then revealing your metatype later (something deckers are better positioned to do than almost anyone else in the shadows). Does the confrontation help sort out the racists right off the bat, or does it raise people's hackles when a lower-key approach might ease them into a position of more tolerance? At present, I don't have enough evidence on either side to say what's best.
- Fianchetto

- It's better to find out who people are as soon as possible than wait around for them to sneak their racism up on you.
- 2XL

WILLIAM "BULL" MACCALLISTER

MALE ORK

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
[illegible]							5	4.19	6

Initiative	12 + 4D6
Condition Monitor	12/10
Limits	Physical 9(10), Mental 7(9), Social 7
Armor	12
Active Skills	Automatics 7, Automotive Mechanic 7, Blades 6, Clubs 7, Computer 11, Cybercombat (IC) 10 (+2), Disguise 4, Electronic Warfare 9, Etiquette 8 (Matrix +2), First Aid 3, Gymnastics 5, Hacking 13, Hardware 10, Heavy Weapons 7 (Assault Cannon +2), Leadership 5, Longarms 7, Negotiation 9, Perception 7, Pilot Ground Vehicle 7, Palming 4, Pistols 8 (Revolvers +2), Running 7, Sneaking 4, Software 10, Swimming 4, Unarmed Combat 4
Knowledge Skills	Chicago Area 9, Chicago Street Gangs 7, Comic Books 6, Computer Hardware 9, Computer Software 10, Corporate Security 7, Insect Spirits 10, Matrix Security 10, Ork Underground 6, Police Procedures 4 Seattle Area 4, Seattle Politics 6, Seattle Street Gangs 3, Shadowrunner Lore 9, 20th Century Sci-Fi 6
Languages	English N, Sioux 4, Japanese 4, Spanish 3
Qualities	Allergy (Moderate, Gold), Aptitude (Hacking), Exceptional Attribute (Logic), Trog Leader
Augmentations	Datajack (x2), cerebral booster 3, math SPU, synaptic booster 3, smartlink
Gear	Armored jacket, AR contacts (w/ image link, thermographic vision, vision magnification, vision enhancement 3), Fairlight Caliban, Fairlight Excalibur (9,8,7,6), programs (Armor, Baby Monitor, Biofeedback Filter, Browse, Edit, Encryption, Hammer, Signal Scrub, Toolbox, Wrapper)
Vehicles	Eurocar Westwind 3000 (Ground Craft, Handl 6/4, Speed 7, Accel 3, Bod 10, Armor 8, Pilot 3, Sensor 5, Seats 2) Lockheed Optic-X2 (Small Drone, Handl 4, Speed 4, Accel 1, Bod 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) 4 x MCT Fly-Spy (Minidrone, Handl 4, Speed 3, Accel 2, Body 1, Armor 0, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) Toyota Gopher (Ground Craft, Handl 5/5, Speed 4, Accel 2, Bod 14, Armor 10, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 3)
Weapons	Ruger Super Warhawk [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5, DV 9P, AP –6, SS, RC —, 6(cy), w/ APDS ammo] Panther XXL [Assault Cannon, Acc 5(7), DV 17P, AP –6, SS, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo]

WILLIAM "BULL" MACCALLISTER

MALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
6	4	4	6	5	5

Condition Monitor	12/10
Armor	9
Skills	Hacking 6 + L, Electronics 6 + L, Firearms 4 + A, Heavy Weapons 4 + A, Negotiation 5 + C, Bug Spirits (K)
Shadow Amps	Essence 5 Cyberdeck 4 (Matrix. May reroll 2 dice on matrix actions, Firewall +3, Matrix CM 12, run 2 programs at a time) Hammer (Program. +2 dice to cybercombat) Datajack and Headware (Cyberware. May access Matrix in full VR+1 die matrix actions, –1 Essence) Track (Program. May reroll 2 dice on Matrix track actions)
Qualities	Codeslinger, Fame (Matrix), Allergy (Gold)
Gear	Commlink (Fairlight Caliban), fake SIN, GMC Bulldog [A 12, D 16], medkit
Weapons	Ruger Super Warhawk [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —] Panther XXL Assault cannon [DV 12P, Close OK, Near OK, Far OK; at close and near range character can take damage, too, at GM discretion]

BEAKER

Beaker's one of the technical experts here on JackPoint. She was born in 2035 to two troll parents in Newark, New Jersey, still a sprawling metroplex of its own despite being just outside the corporate enclave of Manhattan. Her father worked as a janitor in an Ares office building, while her mother waited tables and did odd jobs to supplement their meager income. While they didn't live in the slums or in poverty, the family struggled to make ends meet every month. The younger of two children, Beaker enjoyed technology and watched any trid documentaries she could find when the trid subscription was working. Her older brother, meanwhile, joined the Halloweeners and was killed in a gang scuffle just after she turned twelve. Their mother, Jessica, never recovered from her grief over his death and died within the year. Jack, her father, swore to make sure his daughter got a better life. He worked to nurture her interest in technology, especially chemistry, and pushed her to do her best.

She graduated from high school in the top ten of her class. After she received several rejections and almost gave up hope, she was accepted to the University of Albany, where she graduated

with a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry. Getting a job was about as difficult as getting into college—she applied unsuccessfully for a number of positions, eventually obtaining a job with Hendrick's Demolitions, a company specializing in safely demolishing buildings. While there, Beaker learned about architecture as well as the demolitions business. When her boss, Rob Hendrick, was shot by mobsters for falling behind in his protection payments, Beaker disappeared in the chaos and started working as a consultant.

It was while consulting that she came to the attention of FastJack, who asked her to lend her chemistry and demolitions expertise to JackPoint. Soon after that, the mobster behind the killing of Rob Hendrick was executed after he lost several shipments of explosives and materials belonging to the Mob.

- For what it's worth, I had nothing to do with the thug's death. I didn't like the way the Mob handled the whole thing, but I was early in my career, and I wasn't about to make organized crime mad at me.
- Beaker

- That sounds prudent, even if the guy's quick death seems like quite a coincidence.
- Dr. Spin

Beaker continues to work in the shadows as a consultant on matters of demolitions and architecture, and has access to excellent inside contacts for plans that aren't available to the public. She has the interesting position of having been one of the rare trolls in a scientific field, only to leave it for the shadows. Her journey through college and her job show some of the challenges trogs face, and the high hurdles they have to overcome. Despite this, Beaker is sometimes less vocal about trog-rights issues than some of her peers.

- I'm just careful about what I attribute to racism. Getting into college is hard. Getting a job is hard. And it's harder when you have parents who didn't go to college and can't provide a lot of support. How much of the trouble I ran into was because I was a troll, and how much was because of economic or other circumstances? I'm not naïve—I know racism exists and it played a role in the whole process. But I don't know how much of a role, and as a scientist, I'm wary of speaking definitively about unknowns.
- Beaker

BEAKER

FEMALE TROLL

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
6	3	5	6	5	6	4	3	6	4

Initiative	9 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/11
Limits	Physical 8, Mental 7, Social 6
Armor	12
Active Skills	Blades 4, Chemistry 8, Computer 5, Demolitions 9, Electronics 4, Etiquette 3, Industrial Mechanic 8, Perception 6, Pistols 4, Running 3
Knowledge Skills	Academia 4, Acids and Bases 7, Architecture 5, Chemical Manufacturers 6, Demolitions 5
Languages	English N (Cityspeak), Spanish 3
Qualities	Indomitable 3 (+3 Mental)
Gear	Armored jacket (w/ chemical protection 5), 4x detonator caps, explosive foam (Rating 20), fake SIN (Rating 5), Hermes Ikon, tag eraser
Weapons	Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m)]

BEAKER

FEMALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
6	3				

Condition Monitor	
Armor	
Skills	Hacking 4 + L, Chemistry (K), Negotiation 4 + C, Architecture (K), Demolitions (K)
Shadow Amps	Jack of All Trades (Social, reroll 1 die for any test you don't have the skill) Team Player (Social, freely gift your plot points or edge to another player)
Qualities	College Education, Lucky, Low Pain Tolerance
Gear	Explosives, fake SIN, Hermes Ikon
Weapons	Defiance EX Shocker [DV 6S, Close OK, Near –4, Far —]

SNOPES

Everyone's favorite skeptic was kind enough to grant me a voice-only interview via the Matrix. I've downloaded the transcript here.

Sunshine: Thanks for agreeing to this interview. I know you value your privacy.

Snopes: Especially in recent years. The heat's off enough that I can talk, and when I heard you were looking into me, I figured the best way to make sure you were accurate was to give you the data straight from the source.

- Or so you could provide the disinformation you wanted everyone to know.
- Dr. Spin

- I'll grant that's a viable motive for some, but come on. You know what I value.
- Snopes

Besides, you agreed that if I felt a question was too personal, I could refuse to answer.

Sunshine: Hopefully we won't run into that too much. So, why don't you tell us about your childhood?

Snopes: I was the second-oldest of five boys, each of us a year apart. My mother is an absolute hero. We were hellions growing up. The oldest, Tommy, was quite the athlete until he lost his leg in a motorcycle accident. He could still hit and run just fine, but with cyberware he wasn't eligible for organized sports. I was fascinated by the stories everyone talked about, like the one about old man Jones, so I looked into them to find out what was true and what was fabrication.

Sunshine: Who was old man Jones?

Snopes: He was the crotchety old ork on the fifth floor who was rumored to have been a corporate hit man.

Sunshine: Was he?

Snopes: No, he wasn't. I searched the Matrix and couldn't find out anything on him.

Sunshine: How did you figure it out, then?

Snopes: I went up and talked to him, and eventually asked him outright. That was the day that I knew I wanted to search for the truth for a living. He told me he worked for Fuchi as a wageslave. When I asked why he didn't set everyone straight, he told me it kept the kids in the complex from fucking with him, so why should he? I was the first one to have the guts to ring his bell in years. What was more important was that he encouraged me to find out about things for myself.

Sunshine: He pointed you down the path your life would take, then.

Snopes: Yep. He became more of a parent to me than my own parents, in a way. To keep food on the table, they both worked two jobs. You can't imagine how much food five teenage ork boys eat in a week. He nourished my mind while they kept me and my brothers fed. When I was old enough, I moved out on my own and started working for the *UCAS Enquirer*.

Sunshine: You worked for that rag?

Snopes: I did. I made a decent wage and was able to send some money to my parents to help with my brothers. I learned how to really get to the truth of a story there. I think my editor hated me by the time I left. I debunked more stories than I published in the year I was there.

Sunshine: Where did you go from there?

Snopes: I started my own investigation service to look into the conspiracy theories, rumors, urban legends—the kinds of things people pass along all over the Matrix. When they're true, we make sure they come to light. When they aren't, we make sure that's known, too.

Sunshine: So, the same thing you do here on JackPoint.

Snopes: Pretty much. We do other investigations too, and they help pay the bills and keep the agency afloat.

Sunshine: Do you want to plug your agency?

Snopes: Nope.

Sunshine: You mentioned the expense of feeding a family of orks. What else about being an ork has shaped who you are?

Snopes: It's contributed to my need to back up absolutely everything with evidence. I know that a lot of people have a disinclination to believe me just because of my tusks. So I make sure I have evidence. I make sure you *have* to believe me, because I'm always on the side with the evidence.

Sunshine: There are, of course, plenty of rumors and urban legends about orks and trolls, and no amount of debunking makes them go away. Why is that, and do you find that discouraging?

Snopes: The "why" is actually fairly simple—it's one thing to gather evidence about an individual and show what they did or didn't do, but it's a whole lot tougher to prove anything about an entire group of people. Someone sees an ork or a troll acting in the way they think all orks and trolls do, and it serves to confirm their pre-existing bias. When you present numbers that say, no, your personal experience is actually prejudiced, they shut you out. Simple human nature—and metahuman nature, too.

As far as whether it gets discouraging—yeah. Of course it does. There are certain things it feels like I've debunked a thousand times, like the story about the Angel of the Night, a supposed elf who went around casting healing spells on orks and trolls during the Night of Rage until she collapsed and died from exhaustion. There is zero evidence that she existed, and most stories about her didn't start being

told until about five years after the Night of Rage, but it's a nice story about someone helping out across racial boundaries on one of the worst days in modern times, so people really want to believe it. I mean, I guess I can't be too discouraged—the persistence of this story shows that people want to believe good things sometimes—but the fact that error can persist and spread faster than reliable fact is annoying. I've given up on the whole truth-spreading business at least a dozen times, but that usually only lasts a day or so, then I'm back in the saddle, because in the end, it's what I do. If I don't have faith in the value of the truth, I don't have much at all.

SNOPES

MALE ORK

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
4	3	7 (9)	2	3	5	4	5	4.5	4

Initiative	7 + 2D6
Condition Monitor	10/11
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 7, Social 7
Armor	12
Active Skills	Clubs 4, Computer 8, Con 7, Cybercombat 3, Disguise 8, Diving 2, Electronic Warfare 5, Etiquette 8, Hacking 5, Hardware 5, Impersonation 5, Leadership 4, Locksmith 6, Negotiation 6, Palming 7, Perception 8, Performance 6, Pilot Ground Craft 6, Pistols 5, Sneaking 8
Knowledge Skills	Clandestine Organizations 5, Conspiracy Chats 5, Conspiracy Theories 5
Languages	English N, Spanish 3
Qualities	First Impression, Photographic Memory
Augmentations	Cyberears (Rating 4, w/ audio enhancement 3, balance augmenter, damper, select sound filter 6, sound link, spatial recognizer), fingertip compartment, 2 smuggling compartments, synaptic booster 1
Gear	armored jacket, chameleon suit, gold certified credstick, Hermes Chariot (5 4 4 2), Hermes Ikon
Weapons	Area Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo] Extendable baton [Club, Acc 5, Reach 1, DV 5P, AP —]

SNOPES

MALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
3	3	5	5	5	4

Condition Monitor	10/11
Armor	13
Skills	Con 4 + C, Escape Artist 3 + A, Firearms 3 + A, Hacking 4 + L, Stealth 4 + A, Tracking 4 + L
Shadow Amps	Essence 4.5 Custom Lined Coat (Gear. 10 armor, –3 perception for items in the coat) Cyberears (Cyberware. Can listen to conversations at both Close and Near ranges. May reroll 1 failed die on hearing-related tests. –1 Essence) Synaptic Booster (Bioware. +1 action. –0.5 Essence)
Qualities	Hawkeye, Silver Tongue, Low Pain Tolerance
Gear	Hermes Ikon, medkit
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —]

BUTCH

Butch is well known on JackPoint for her information on medicine as it relates to the shadows. She weighs in on everything medical, such as clinics, street docs, and DocWagon, and lately she has become our resident CFD expert. I wasn't able to catch up with her for an interview, but I tracked down some of her history, and have some important clarifications to make.

She grew up in the Minneapolis metroplex, the youngest of three children of mid-level executives with Knight Errant. From a young age, she was fascinated with medicine and how bodies vary based on metatype. She graduated near the top of her class from the University of Minnesota and did her internship at the downtown hospital. Before long, DocWagon approached her to work as a combat medic as part of a response team in exchange for paying off her loans. She enjoyed saving people, but she also realized DocWagon cared for people only as much as they could pay. All that mattered to Butch was the survival rate of the people in her care. On more than one occasion, she was reprimanded for aiding non-clients. She felt that medical care should be available to everyone, and she followed through on that belief by volunteering at a local clinic in her spare time.

- Her feelings on this have deep roots—her older sister died shortly after a car crash because she didn't have coverage, and the medical team that arrived did nothing for her.
- Sounder

After she had put in the required time with DocWagon, she quit to join the clinic she'd been volunteering at, now on a full-time basis.

To make ends meet, the clinic started doing black-market transplants and cyberware surgery. Whenever drug users came in, Butch did her best to convince them to give up the drugs and turn their life around. Still, she never refused anyone treatment. She'd encourage them to live in a more healthy manner, but she figured her first job was to make sure they survived long enough to make more choices in life.

Recently, with the appearance of CFD, Butch has been presented with some serious moral dilemmas. While she wants to help these people, she realizes that in most cases they're too far gone by the time they come into her care to be saved. The person before her is an infection, and not truly the person who came to her for cure. This conflicts with her belief that everyone deserves treatment no matter their situation. Because of this issue,

she's been working with several corporate partners to find a way to truly cure them. So far, she has only found limited success.

- One of the corporations she's working with is MCT. Everyone's ready to crucify me for getting them test subjects, but she gets a pass for performing the actual experiments? Talk about hypocrisy.
- Clockwork

- She doesn't call her patients freaks, or say the world would be better without them like you do about technomancers. It's about the perspective, not the process.
- Netact

Butch has perhaps enjoyed some benefits of being an ork in her profession. It's well-known that DocWagon likes to throw orks and trolls into their high-threat response teams, and those are the teams that tend to treat the most dire wounds in the most stressful circumstances. Her emergency skills were well honed in that situation, and her clinic experience means she knows how to deliver the best care possible with less than state-of-the-art equipment. And of course, she knows ork physiology quite well, so she's aces in giving them trauma care. Her expertise is slightly reduced when it comes to trolls, but she's still better at trauma care for trolls than ninety-nine percent of the medicos you'll ever meet.

- You're very kind, but I have no illusions about myself. My specialty is keeping people alive until the truly skilled—and well-equipped—experts can provide the care they need. I've gotten better at the research side of the job, and I've developed some skills I never thought I would dive into, but I know how good the best in the world are at this work, and I know I'm not there.
- Butch

BUTCH

FEMALE ORK

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	5.2	4

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/11
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 7(9), Social 7
Armor	12
Active Skills	Biotechnology 8, Chemistry 5, Computer 5, Cybertechnology 9, First Aid 9, Instruction 5, Medicine 10, Palming 4, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Pistols 4
Knowledge Skills	Biology 5, Chemical Compounds 4, Disease Vectors 4, Medical Procedures 5, Psychology 7, Toxins 5
Languages	English N, Japanese 3 (Cityspeak +2)
Qualities	Addiction (Mild, Long haul), Allergy (Mild, Silver), Analytical Mind, Aptitude (Medicine)
Augmentations	Cerebral booster 3, math CPU, vision magnification
Gear	Transys Avalon, medkit (rating 6), 3 tranq patches, 4 trauma patches
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo]

BUTCH

FEMALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
4	5	5	5	4	4

Condition Monitor	10/11
Armor	9
Skills	Biotech 6 + L, Firearms 3 + A, Biology (K)
Shadow Amps	Essence 5.5 Cerebral Booster (Bioware. Reroll 1 die on logic based tests, –0.5 Essence) I Know Everybody (Social. Gain [Charisma rating] contacts)
Qualities	Allergy (silver), Leader of the Pack
Gear	Hermes Ikon, medkit, stim patches, trauma patches
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —]

SOUNDER

I reached out to Sounder through some mutual contacts. When she told me she wasn't interested in doing an interview, I investigated her background and history on my own.

She grew up in Seattle, with the familiar story of an overworked mother trying to keep food on the table. At a very young age, Sounder started hanging with the Crimson Crush and was soon on the streets with them. A natural driver, she became their wheelman of choice. Eventually, she moved on to running their drugs into Seattle from the Salish-Shidhe. These activities brought her to the attention of the Yakuza, who recruited her. As she watched as the border patrols became tighter, she began smuggling through the Puget Sound, at first using speed boats and then bigger crafts.

- And now a bitchin' submarine that is one of the few things in the water that would make me nervous if I ever got on her bad side. So I make sure I don't.
- Kane

These days, she's slowly moved away from the Yakuza and is doing more independent work. This started after one of the operations went badly and she lost an eye.

- With the Yaks, if it isn't a death sentence, it's usually a part of a finger. What did she do that made them take an eye instead?
- Baka Dabora

- The guy was trying to slit her throat, and she didn't quite get out of the way. She then fed him his knife. Or at least that's the story I heard.
- Butch

Though cyber replacements are commonly available, Sounder wears an eyepatch when the mood suits her. When asked, she says it helps with the nautical feel of her smuggling operation.

- She has a cybereye, and she only wears the eyepatch when she's trying to play the pirate. Or just feels like looking cool.
- Turbo Bunny

Despite her obvious affinity with pirates, she doesn't perform piracy on the shipping in the Seattle area. Rather, she quietly moves her customers' goods up and down the Pacific coast. Despite the disagreement with the one Yakuza boss, she continues to move guns for them into and out of Seattle. She has numerous contacts in the San Francisco area of the California Free State and even has a couple of ships registered in the CFS. She has a lot of connections in the Seattle area and is an enduring figure in the club scene, though she favors the dark and moody spots over the hot and trendy ones. If you're going to be one of the top smugglers in Seattle, you need to be able to make your way into Tír Tairngire, so Sounder has a few ways in. Not easy ones, though, because nothing about the Tír is easy. That means, of course, that it'll cost you more to smuggle things across that border.

I was going to stop with the well-known people there and move on to some up-and-comers, but it was suggested I should include myself. So read on!

SOUNDER

FEMALE ORK

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
7 (8)	3	6 (9)	4	4	4	5	5	1.2	5

Initiative	9(12) + 1D6
Condition Monitor	12/10
Limits	Physical 7(9), Mental 5, Social 6
Armor	13
Active Skills	Blades 8, Con 8, Demolitions 4 ,Disguise 4, ElectronicsWarfare 6, Etiquette 8, Gunnery 7, Longarms 9, Nautical Mechanic 8, Navigation 9, Palming 6, Perception 7, Pilot Aircraft 4, Pilot Ground Craft 7, Pilot Watercraft 10, Sneaking 5, Survival 4, Throwing Weapons 5, Unarmed Combat 7
Knowledge Skills	Puget Sound (area) 7, Ocean Currents 6, Organized Crime 6, Northwest Yakuza Hierarchy, 7 Pacific Northwest 4, Smuggling Routes 7
Languages	English N, Japanese 6 (Cityspeak +2), Or'zet 5
Qualities	Distinctive Style (eye patch), High Pain Threshold 2, Quick Healer, Toughness
Augmentations	Bone lacing (plastic), control rig 3 (betaware), reaction enhancers 3, simrig, smartlink, voice modulator
Gear	Hermes Ikon, medkit (Rating 6), nautical mechanic shop
Vehicles	Ares Venture (Aircraft, Handl 5, Speed 7, Accel 4, Bod 16, Armor 14, Pilot 4, Sensor 4, Seats 6) Aztech Profit (Watercraft, Handl 2, Speed 2, Accel 1, Bod 14, Armor 22, Pilot 3, Sensor 2, Seats 10) Echo Motors Metaway (Groundcraft, Handl 4/2, Speed 4, Accel 1, Body 10, Armor 4, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 1) Harley-Davidson Nightmare (Groundcraft, Handl 4/3, Speed 5, Accel 2, Body 8, Armor 8, Pilot 2, Sensor 3, Seats 2) MCT-Nissan Roto-Drone (Medium Drone, Handl 4, Speed 4, Accel 2, Bod 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) Proteus A.G. "Krake" (Small Drone, Speed 3, Accel 4, Body 2, Armor 2, Pilot 4, Sensor 3, w/ 4 micro-torpedoes [chemical, DV 6P, AP –4, 1m radius, w/ acid damage])
Weapons	Enfield AS-7 [shotgun, Acc 4(5), DV 11S(e), AP –1, SA/BF, RC —, 24(d), w/stick and shock ammo] Survival knife [Knife, Acc 5, Reach 0, DV 7P, AP –1,]

SOUNDER

FEMALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
4	3	4	4	5	3

Condition Monitor	10
Armor	4
Skills	Pilot (Ground) 3 + A, Pilot (Other) 5 + A, Con 4 + C, Firearms 3 + A, Negotiation 4 + C, Organized Crime (K)
Shadow Amps	Essence 3 Control Rig 3 (Cyberware. Control vehicle in VR, +1 die to vehicle actions, may reroll 3 dice, –2 Essence) Smartlink (Cyberware. +1 die to firearms or heavy weapons. –1 Essence)
Qualities	Distinctive style (eye patch), Gearhead, Home Ground (Puget Sound)
Gear	Ares Venture (A 12, D 10), Aztech Profit (A 18, D 12), Echo Motors Metaway (A 3, D 8), Harley-Davidson Nightmare (A 6, D 6), Hermes Ikon, MCT-Nissan Roto-Drone (A 3, D 3), Mechanic toolkit, medkit, Proteus A.G. "Krake" (A 2, D 2), Survival kit
Weapons	Enfield AS-7 shotgun [DV 9P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —, at Close range can take -2 dice pool penalty to attack two targets] Knife [DV 3P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

SUNSHINE

I was born the second son of two mid-level executives of Novatech in Denver in 2052. It was a different time and town then. I wasn't born with a silver spoon in my tusks, but I wasn't born into poverty, either. My father was a rising star who broke through a lot of barriers that had been in place up until then. I learned a lot from my father; for example, he taught me about office politics and how important reading people is. He didn't always know I was listening—or even that I was there—when I absorbed some of these lessons. For example, once when I was five, I was hiding in the closet and overheard his negotiations with his new boss. As a mid-level exec, he was generally supposed to act grateful for having a job that was not completely horrible, and senior executives typically expected a lot of sucking up. But my father watched his boss carefully and saw that if he appeared as a total doormat, he would quickly lose any chance at gaining the woman's respect. So he gently pushed back on an item or two, staying polite but letting her know he wasn't just rolling over on everything. She became more engaged in the conversation as it went on, because she enjoyed exchanging ideas more than she would have liked giving orders. He read her correctly and met her on a level she would respond to.

That didn't mean he had found a permanent home. In 2058, he jumped ship for greener pastures at Erika, or so he thought.

Part of my ongoing education was that I learned that the megacorps are ruthless, and the people are just cogs in the machine. Everything is about the value you can currently offer—past contributions aren't worth a thing. My mother was a Matrix specialist who lost her life during Crash 2.0. The corporation gave my dad two days off and their condolences. It wasn't long after that when Novatech, Erika, and Transys Neuronet merged to form NeoNET. Suddenly, my father was working alongside people he'd left behind when he went to Erika. They all said there were no hard feelings, but I'd learned enough by then to know it wasn't true. My older brother followed in my father's footsteps and joined NeoNET. I was top of my class, and everyone expected I would soon be joining them as well.

Instead, I walked away and joined the shadows as a deep-cover operative. I got out on time—my father was unceremoniously fired a year after my graduation, his people-skills no match for the office powers aligned against him. On the outside, I work the long con, finding out the dirt and information the corporations or companies want to keep hidden, then making sure those secrets come to light. FastJack saw the value of what I was doing and invited me here. Simple enough.

Most recently, I've been working deep cover inside Horizon in Los Angeles. You saw some of what I learned back in the *Twilight Horizon* download, but I decided there was more to learn, so I continued finding ways to work with the corp, especially as they worked to evolve the new version of the Consensus.

- Don't tease us—what have you found out?
- Cosmo

- I don't want to detract from the main subject here, but the main issue is figuring out when crowds are wise and when they're not. Remember that while we may curse the corps until our faces turn blue, the Shiawase decision and other such matters never had a chance to be overturned because there wasn't a popular movement to change them until it was far too late. Crowds didn't have the wisdom to shoot that down as soon as they needed to, simply because crowds didn't have the information they needed to evaluate the situation properly. So that's what Consensus 2.0 is working on; not just taking the temperature of Horizon employees to help keep the corp on a steady path, but providing useful information and weighting responses based on the expected expertise of the responders.There is also a question about how quickly the Consensus can affect real-time decision making, and that's still the subject of many heated discussions.
- Sunshine

So that's my bio. What about my orkness? How

does it affect my life? Honestly, in most ways, not a ton. My background wasn't impoverished, and my father's career advancement and obstacles seemed to be far more based on his personality than his metatype. Did I hear some insults growing up about my tusks and protruding forehead? Yeah. But other kids I knew got picked on for their red hair, their freckles, their pimples, and whatever. To me, it seemed like part of growing up. People will find some way of making fun of what you look like, and you just have to roll with it.

Here's the important thing I learned, though—just because it didn't seem like a big deal to me didn't mean it's not a big deal to others. Not everyone can shrug off the different levels of abuse they get, and frankly they shouldn't have to. And while I saw the comments in my appearance as little more than teasing, other people have had to deal with much more severe harassment or even physical attacks. I was lucky enough to be sheltered from the worst of the problems, but I can't just assume the problems don't exist.

SUNSHINE

MALE ORK
SUNSHINE

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4.2	5

Initiative	10 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/11
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 6, Social 7
Armor	12
Active Skills	Blades 4, Clubs 4, Computer 5, Con 13, Disguise 11, Etiquette 10, Forgery 5, First Aid 3, Gymnastics 5, Hardware 3, Impersonation 8, Locksmith 5, Negotiation 8, Perception 11, Pilot Ground Craft 5, Pistols 5, Sneaking 6, Throwing Weapons 5, Unarmed Combat 6
Knowledge Skills	Corporate Politics 6, Corporate Procedures 8, Horizon 4, Security Procedures 8, Security Systems 6
Languages	English N, Japanese 4 (Corp +2, 133tspeak +2), Spanish 4 (Corp +2, 133tspeak +2)
Qualities	Aptitude (Con), Human Looking, Magic Resistance 1, Corporate SIN
Augmentations	Cyberears (Rating 4, w/ audio enhancement 3, balance augmenter, damper, select sound filter 6, sound link, spatial recognizer), data jack, fingertip compartment, sleep regulator, 3 smuggling compartments, tailored pheromones 2
Gear	Area jammer (Rating 6), armored jacket, autopicker (Rating 6), bug scanner (Rating 6), chameleon suit, contacts (Capacity 3, w/ thermographic, flare compensation, smartlink), keycard copier (Rating 6), 10 x light sticks, maglock passkey (Rating 6), sequencer (Rating 6), tag eraser, Transys Avalon, white noise generator (Rating 6)
Weapons	Streetline Special [Pistol, Acc 4, DV 6P, AP —, SA, RC —, 6(c), w/ regular ammo] Throwing knife [Knife, Acc 5, DV 6P, AP –1]

MALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
5	5	5	4	5	5

Condition Monitor	11/11
Armor	8
Skills	Close Combat 4 + A, Con 6 + C, Negotiation 5 + C, Electronics 4 + L, Firearms 3 +A
Shadow Amps	Essence 4.5 Dynamic Handprint (Bioware. Can keep from leaving prints or leave someone elses, –0.5 essence) Audio Analyzer (Cyberware. –1 Essence)
Qualities	Hawkeye, Silver Tongue, SINer corporate
Gear	Fake SIN, Hermes Ikon, medkit
Weapons	Streetline Special [DV 5P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —]

QIN "SLEDGEHAMMER" XIO

Sledgehammer grew up the youngest child of two MCT wageslaves in a middle-class neighborhood of Atlanta, CAS. Unsurprisingly he encountered a lot of drek in his corporate school, with constant teasing and prejudice from both his peers and teachers, and he used the Matrix as an escape. He enjoyed coding and vanishing into virtual reality, where he could hide his physical differences. While this gave him some way to use his time, it also further isolated him from his peers.

The pressures he was facing came to a head one day when one of the worst bullies smashed his Transys commlink. As Qin fought his anger, the bully's commlink shorted out and caught fire. Qin began shaking—everyone assumed it was from the conflict, but Qin knew better. He had thought about frying the commlink, and it happened. Not only that, but to his shock he discovered he was still connected to the Matrix even without his 'link. He'd heard the stories about technomancers and how MCT was looking for them—he thought that he might finally have a chance to fit in and be important, somewhere.

Qin was very eager to share the news with his family that night. Before he could, though, his older sister described how one of her classmates had been dragged out of class after testing positive as a technomancer. His father replied, "As they should have. They're a problem. They need to be contained and studied so their threat can be dealt with."

Qin's heart sank as his dream slipped away. He left that night, before the testing made it to his class, finding refuge in a squatter encampment for a couple of weeks before he was befriended by a

ganger who thought his muscle would be an asset.

When asked what his name was, Qin made up an alias on the spot—Sledgehammer, because it sounded as tough as he wanted to be. Later, as it became apparent his talents ran more toward hacking than breaking heads, his assignments were adjusted, but the name stuck. His chief rival, another hacker named Bytespike, was confused by how he could do so well using such a junk commlink. It didn't take long before Bytespike figured out Sledgehammer was a technomancer, and he tried to get a local runner he knew to pick him up for MCT. Instead, the runner recruited Sledgehammer, and the troll has been running the shadows ever since.

He and the team he runs with have slowly been making a name for themselves in the Confederation of American States. They specialize in data steals and infiltrations, though they will do what is needed to pay the bills. Sledgehammer researched the records and found out that his family never really looked for him when he disappeared. He hasn't looked back since, and considers his teammates, the only ones who've ever accepted him for who he is, are more of a family than his real one. They're based in New Orleans, but the interest in the Biloxi Institute of Technology has them venturing over there a fair amount in recent months.

- Don't let the name fool you—this guy is far more finesse than brute force. He loves making sprites, especially to do some early forays or cause distractions before he goes in himself. He'll never let the sprites do all the heavy lifting though—what fun is it being a hacker if you don't, you know, actually hack?
- Pistons

QIN "SLEDGEHAMMER" XIO

MALE TROLL

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	R
6	3	3	5	5	5	4	2	6	2	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/11
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 7, Social 5
Armor	12
Active Skills	Automatics 1, Compiling 7, Computer 5, Con 4, Cybercombat 3, Decompiling 4, First Aid 3, Forgery 4, Gymnastics 2, Hacking 6, Hardware 4, Locksmith 4, Negotiation 3, Pistols 3, Software 8, Unarmed Combat 3
Knowledge Skills	MCT Infrastructure 3, Matrix Hangouts 3, Matrix Protocols 3
Languages	Japanese N, English 3 (Cityspeak +2, Corp +2)
Qualities	Natural Hardening, Magic Resistance 2, Prejudice (Japanese, Biased), Social Stress
Gear	Armored jacket, electronics toolkit, Erika Elite, fake SIN (Rating 4), glasses (Capacity 2, w/ smartlink, vision magnification)
Complex Forms	Cleaner, Pulse Storm, Puppeteer, Resonance Spike, Resonance Veil, Static Bomb, Static Veil, Transcendent Grid, Tattletale
Registered Sprites	Crack Sprite (level 4, 3 tasks), Data Sprite (level 4, 2 tasks), Fault Sprite (level 6, 3 tasks)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo]

QIN "SLEDGEHAMMER" XIO

MALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
5	3	5	5	2	2

Condition Monitor	11/11
Armor	9
Skills	Electronics 5 + L, Firearms 2 + A, Hacking 7 + L, Negotiation 3 + C, Tasking 5 + L
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 Emerged Cleaner (Technomancer. Erase last 3 Matrix actions from overwatch score) Pulse Storm (Technomancer. Opponent –1 to roll per net hit) Resonance Spike (Technomancer. Cybercombat Matrix damage = 8, Defense = Logic + Firewall)
Qualities	Natural Hardening, Toughness, Paranoia
Gear	Enhanced vision goggles, medkit
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —]

JANE "MACGYVER" TOMLIN

This ork was born in 2057 in Detroit, the daughter of Ares factory workers. Watching her parents work long hours for barely enough to get by and feed their three children told Jane at an early age that she wanted something different in life.

Her father told her that finding what she did well and excelling at it was the way to success, so Jane spent a lot of her adolescence looking for what she could do well. As she got older, she grew concerned as she tried new things and didn't excel at any of them, though she found she could pick up anything and do it moderately well fairly quickly. She began volunteering to help anyone who needed it so that she could get the experience of how to do all sorts of things. Before long, she took to the streets to learn the skills she couldn't learn through her parents or their friends.

Jane was still struggling to find her place when she was forced to pick a lock under pressure and did it faster than she ever had. It didn't take her long to realize she did her best work when the stakes were highest. She began taking jobs, filling in with different runner groups since she could fill whatever role was needed. She saved nuyen to get some basic cyberware modifications and has become a reliable runner who doesn't specialize in anything but has a wide variety of skills that are useful in most situations.

Eventually, one of the out-of-town teams Jane worked with liked her well enough that they offered her a permanent position. She moved to Atlanta, where the team was headquartered, and now works with them mainly in the CAS. Break-ins and extractions are the team's specialty, and stealth is their emphasis. If John Dickson Carr were still alive and writing locked-room mysteries, he'd be studying Macgyver's team for inspiration.

- Copy that. Check this: Renraku has a weapons development facility in Atlanta, and like all such facilities, it's a high-security, locked-down affair. There was an engineer there named Estee Jackson, and word got out that she was going to be the target of an extraction. Renraku was having none of that, so they relocated her to an apartment in the development site designed for the express purpose of keeping highly valued personnel isolated and safe. Cameras outside, cameras inside, no wireless systems, watcher spirits outside, spirits of air inside. Armed guards outside the door, and of course it's in the middle of a whole Renraku facility. Jackson checks in for the night, cameras show her going to bed and not moving from that spot. The next morning guards go to wake her up and find that instead of Jackson in bed, its one of the materialized air spirits mimicking her form. The other spirit in the room has no knowledge of any switch between spirit and actual scientist, and cameras

show nothing happened during the night. And oh yeah—biometric scanning done as Jackson entered the apartment confirmed that it was her, in the flesh. I'd love to know the step-by-step process on that run.

- Hard Exit

JANE "MACGYVER" TOMLIN

FEMALE ORK

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
5	4	MD	4	4	4	4	3	3.2	3

Initiative	9 + 2D6
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 6, Social 6
Armor	12
Active Skills	Archery 2, Armorer 3, Automotive Mechanic 3, Blades 4, Chemistry 4, Clubs 3, Computer 4, Con 6, Disguise 4, Electronic Warfare 3, Escape Artist 4, Etiquette 4, Firearms skill group 4, First Aid 5, Forgery 2, Freefall 3, Gunnery 3, Gymnastics 5, Hardware 3, Heavy Weapons 5, Intimidation 5, Locksmith 6, Medicine 2, Navigation 2, Palming 5, Perception 6, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pilot Watercraft 3, Software 2, Survival 3, Throwing Weapons 4, Unarmed Combat 5
Knowledge Skills	Biology 3
Languages	English N, Japanese 3, Spanish 2
Qualities	Photographic Memory, Quick Healer, SIN (UCAS)
Augmentations	Smartlink, synaptic booster 1, troll roarer
Gear	Erika Elite, armored jacket, 10 x security tags, 10 x stealth tags, AR gloves, bug scanner (Rating 4), area jammer (Rating 4), white noise generator (Rating 6), climbing gear, Electronics kit, lockpicking kit, rappelling gloves, survival kit, 100m stealth rope, 3 x stim patches (Rating 4), 5 x tranq patches (Rating 10), 5 trauma patches, first aid kit (Rating 6)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo] Enfield AS-7 [Shotgun, Acc 4(5), DV 11S(e), AP –6, SA/BF, RC —, 24(d), w/ Stick-n-Shock ammo] Ares Alpha [assault rifle, Acc 5(7), DV 11P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), w/ regular ammo] Grenade launcher [Acc 4(6), DV 16P, AP –2, SS, RC —, 6(c), w/ high-explosive] Katana [Sword, Acc 7, Reach 1, DV 7P, AP –3]

JANE "MACGYVER" TOMLIN

FEMALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
4	4	4	4	3	3

Condition Monitor	10/10
Armor	4
Skills	Firearms 4 + A, Piloting (ground) 3 +A, Con 4 + C, Biotech 4 + L, Negotiation 3 + C, Disguise 3 + C
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 More Where That Came From (Gear. 2 additional weapons) Jack of All Trades (Other. Reroll 1 die for any test where you don't have the skill)
Qualities	Silver Tongue, Toughness, SINer (UCAS)
Gear	Area jammer, RFID tags, survival kit
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —] Enfield AS-7 shotgun [DV 9P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —, at close range can take –2 dice pool penalty in order to attack two targets] Ares Alpha [DV 8P, Close OK, Near OK, Far –2] Katana [DV 13P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

SMILEY

This ork fixer is homegrown Seattle talent. He was born in the Redmond Barrens back around 2040. Both his parents were SINless, working whatever job they could find. The oldest of four children, he knew from a young age that life would only give him what he could take for himself. He left home just after his eighteenth birthday so his parents would have one less mouth to feed and bounced around the streets, barely scraping by until he found work as a bouncer at Infinity Club. It was here that he came to the attention of a fixer who was looking for new talent. The fixer connected him with a group of runners seeking some additional muscle. He proved himself a great addition and was soon a regular. As soon as he could, he took some of the money he made and moved his parents and siblings out of the Barrens and into a nicer neighborhood.

Smiley knew there were people who would use his family as leverage against him. For this reason, he set up a blind account to pay for their apartment and broke off contact with them. His team never made it big, but they made a good living. Unable to afford cyberware, he learned to rely on his strength. As he started to get older, he knew his strength and stamina would start to wane, and he also knew he couldn't run forever. He didn't have savings to retire, either. After some thinking he came to a solution: he leveraged his shadow connections and began working as a fixer.

To start out his new career, he went back to his old neighborhood in the Barrens to give back—or at least that was what he told them. In truth, he knew he could get a better cut from newer talent. He used his contacts to get these new runners jobs, and slowly got out of the business himself, determined to stop running before someone blew his brains out. Since the Infinity has become one of the top nightspots in Seattle, he uses his contacts there to recruit talent and get in with the Mr. Johnsons who frequent the club.

- He doesn't go out of his way to favor trogs, but he also doesn't discriminate against them. So if you're new and looking for a fair shot, give him a buzz.
- Sounder

SMILEY

MALE ORK

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
7	4	4	8	3	4	3	3	3.5	5

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	12/10
Limits	Physical 9, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	12
Active Skills	Automatics 5, Blades 6, Gymnastics 4, Heavy Weapons 4, Negotiation 5, Perception 4, Sneaking 6
Knowledge Skills	Psychology 3, Runner Hangouts 4, Seattle Shadowrunners 4
Languages	English N, Cityspeak 3
Qualities	Toughness, Uneducated, Will to Live 1
Augmentations	Dermal plating 1, wired reflexes 1
Gear	Transys Avalon, fake SIN (Rating 6), medkit (Rating 6), white noise generator (Rating 6)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo] Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5(7), DV 11P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), w/regular ammo] Grenade launcher [Acc 4(6), DV 16P, AP –2, SS, RC —, 6(c), w/ high-explosive grenades]

SMILEY

MALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
8	4	3	4	3	5

Condition Monitor	12/10
Armor	7
Skills	Firearms 3 + A, Close Combat 3 + A, Negotiation 3 + C
Shadow Amps	Essence 5 Dermal Plating 1 (Cyberware. –1 to damage taken, –1 Essence) I Know Everybody (Social. Add 3 contacts)
Qualities	Toughness, Tough as Nails, SINer (criminal)
Gear	Fake SIN, Transys Avalon
Weapons	Ares Alpha [DV 8P, Close OK, Near OK, Far –2]

THE JANITOR

The Janitor was born to an ork father and human mother in San Francisco. He is secretive of the exact year he was born, but it was shortly before the Year of the Comet. Although he doesn't remember his mother's death, his father celebrated her life every year on her birthday.

Despite working two menial jobs, his father still couldn't afford child care most of the time. Because of this, the Janitor often accompanied his dad to jobs. The Janitor saw how everyone ignored his father and others who worked the menial jobs. As he hit puberty, he found that he could talk people into seeing things his way.

His father died soon after the Janitor's sixteenth birthday. Determined he wasn't going to live the life of his father, as a nobody who everyone took for granted, he used his social skills and ability to blend in to do infiltrations. He worked menial jobs in between runs to help maintain these skills.

- Knowing how to be easily overlooked is one of the greatest gifts in infiltration. It's often way more effective than the traditional skin-tight black suit.
- Mika

The Janitor started working small jobs, gaining access and getting the rest of the team into secured buildings. They hit some success, but then they took a run to get a prototype from an Ares R&D facility. The Janitor got them in without a problem, but the street samurai got trigger happy and started shooting up the place. A High-Threat Response team arrived before they could get out. Three team members were killed, including the street samurai. After the Janitor delivered the prototype to Ms. Johnson, he decided it was time to move out on his own. He took what he had and invested in the best card readers and maglock passkeys while continuing to hone his skills. He kept to small thefts and spy work until he felt he was good enough for the big time. He moved to Seattle a couple of years ago and continues to specialize in infiltration, as well as occasional deep-cover work.

- Don't know the guy.
- Stone

- Exactly. Since the last team got blown apart, he's been playing things extremely close to the vest, to the point of working with several different identities and rotating them from job to job. Only those closest to him know that he is the Janitor, and even they don't have an inkling what is real name is.
- Mika

THE JANITOR

MALE ORK

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
4	4	3	4	3	3	3	6	6	4

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 4, Social 7(8)
Armor	8
Active Skills	Computer 4, Con 10, Disguise 8, Etiquette 8, Impersonation 8, Locksmith 5, Negotiation 6, Palming 6, Perception 5, Performance 8, Pilot Ground Craft 4, Pistol 4, Sneaking 8, Unarmed Combat 5
Knowledge Skills	Celebrity Gossip 5, Corporate Structures 4, Urban Brawl 4
Languages	English N (Cityspeak 3, Corp 2)
Qualities	Exceptional Attribute (Charisma), Unsteady Hands
Gear	Rockblood Old School Line armor clothing, electronics kit, fake SIN (Rating 5), lockpicking kit, Transys Avalon
Weapons	Defiance EX Shocker [Taser, Acc 4, DV 9S(e), AP –5, SS, RC —, 4(m)]

THE JANITOR

MALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
6	4	3	3	6	4

Condition Monitor	[illegible]
Armor	9
Skills	Con 5 + C, Disguise 4 + C, Electronics 3 + L, Negotiation 3 + C, Stealth 3 + A
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 Jack of All Trades (Social, reroll 1 die on test you don't have the skill) Custom Lined Coat (Gear, 10 armor –3 to perception tests for items in coat)
Qualities	Exceptional Attribute (Charisma), Hawkeye, Unsteady Hands
Gear	Courier bag, Transys Avalon
Weapons	Defiance EX Shocker [DV 6S, Close OK, Near –4, Far —]

JIMMY "STICKER" WILKINSON

The troll assassin known as Sticker was born in the Sioux Nation to a Sioux Wildcat mother and a government official father. Because his mother was often deployed or on missions, Sticker spent most of his time with his father. As a kid, he was agile and played sports; though he wasn't as big as the other trolls, he made up for it with his speed. His uncanny skill at throwing a ball long distances made him a popular teammate during baseball games.

When his mother was killed during a mission, his father never recovered. Less than a year later, Jimmy was a ward of the state. The next shock came when he found out he was magically active, and that was how he could throw so well. Although this meant the loss of his dream his of playing professional sports, the Wildcats saw that he had his mother's talent and recruited him. He became one of their best operatives, a master at infiltration and moving without being seen.

- He often worked as a forward scout, finding the weaknesses in the opponents' defenses.
- Mika

Jimmy worked for the Sioux Nation without regrets—until one day he was left behind on a mission into Tsimshian when his team was working to eliminate a toxic shaman. Things went south and the team received orders to leave, fast, even though Sticker had been separated from the group. He was to be abandoned. He considered that his wake-up call about how his employer viewed him. He allowed them to think he was dead and slipped into the shadows instead.

Taking stock of his skills, he realized the only thing he knew how to do was kill without being seen. He also knew he wasn't just good at this—he excelled at it. He started small, working for local mobsters and drug runners in the Denver area. Soon he was being recruited by megacorps to take care of problems. He has worked on blending into crowds and being unassuming when he isn't sneaking around, but due to his troll stature he doesn't always succeed. He prefers knives and swords to guns—because of his magical ability, he can do almost as much damage throwing a knife as firing a pistol, but without making a sound.

- Yeah, be nervous. Awakened knife-throwing assassin is just as scary as it sounds. Sticker has an entirely pragmatic sense of morality, meaning he'll do what it takes to survive. He doesn't want his life to be complicated by law-enforcement hassles, but often that means carefully hiding the bodies instead of not killing in the first place. If you're ever talking to him, don't appeal to his emotions or his better nature—tell him why what you want makes sense for him. And if it doesn't, run.
- 2XL

JIMMY "STICKER" WILKINSON

MALE TROLL

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
9	5	4	9	4	3	3	2	6	4	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	13/10
Limits	Physical 11, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	11
Active Skills	Arcana 5, Archery 7, Assensing 4, Astral Combat 4, Blades 9, Automatics 3, Locksmith 5, Perception 6, Pistols 6, Running 5, Sneaking 8, Tracking 5, Unarmed Combat 8
Knowledge Skills	Security Procedures 3
Languages	English N
Qualities	Ambidextrous, Code of Honor (won't kill innocents)
Initiate Grade	1
Metamagics	(+1 PP)
Adept Powers	Astral Perception, Combat Sense 2, Danger Sense 2, Improved Reflexes 1, Improved Sneaking 1, Killing Hands, Magic Resistance 2, Missile Parry 2, Mystic Armor 1
Gear	Chameleon suit, fake SIN, lockpicking kit
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo] Bow (Rating 9) [Bow, Acc 6, DV 11P, AP –3, SS, RC —, 24 arrows in quiver, w/ Ruthenium coating] Katana [Sword, Acc 7, Reach 1, DV 12P, AP –3, Ruthenium coated] Throwing knives (5) [Knife, Acc 5, Reach —, DV 10P, AP –1, Ruthenium coated]

JIMMY "STICKER" WILKINSON

MALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
3	5	4	3	2	5

Condition Monitor	12/9
Armor	9
Skills	Close Combat 4 + A, Projectile Weapons 4 + A, Stealth 5 + A
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 Improved Reflexes 1 (Adept. +1 attack) Killing Hands (Adept. Unarmed can do either physical or stun damage) Mystic Armor (Adept. Ignore 1 damage every time your armor is about to absorb damage)
Qualities	Ambidexterous, Toughness, Gremlins
Gear	Fake SIN, lockpicking kit
Weapons	Bow and arrow [DV 6P, Close -2, Near OK, Far –2] Katana [DV 8P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

LOKI

Born in Denver in the 2040s, Loki ended up on the streets at a young age as a member of the Halloweeners. As a mage, he was a great asset to the gang, preferring fireballs over the traditional Molotov cocktails the others employed. Though at first he lived hard and fast and wasn't sure where his next meal was coming from, he improved his skills as a mage and learned about living on the streets. He began using combat drugs to further enhance his ability in fights, and eventually became addicted to jazz.

His life dramatically changed when, during a gang fight, he ended up igniting a city block with a fireball. It was decided the streets of Denver were too dangerous for him, and he left for Seattle. The Halloweeners expected him to take up with the gang there, but instead he started working the shadows.

- Leaving the gang is never easy. The sense of camaraderie often follows you—and so do the grudges of any enemies you might have made.
- Ma'Fan

- It can be both harder and easier for mages. Easier because they have power that can help them hide and that makes people wary of confronting them; harder because it can make you stand out, and there are some powers in the world always looking for the Awakened to twist them to their ends.
- Lyran

He teamed up with a group of runners in Seattle, who started small with datasteals and prototype burglaries from small companies. They came to the attention of Knight Errant when one of the team decapitated a man in the Seattle Underground and took his head with him. Then they saved the daughter of one of Seattle's Mafia bosses, helping them make their name.

Life hasn't always been great for the team, and there have been some bumps in the road. To atone for his past mistakes, Loki joined a magic group Band of the White Hand, which works to make life better through magic, while also promising to do no harm with their Awakened abilities. Over the next year, Loki helped make Seattle a better place by helping eliminate some magical threats, including a master vampire.

One day while helping a client escape via a roof, Loki attacked a man smoking by the edge of the

building, cutting the man down with his Naginata. The poor man was dead before he hit the ground. Loki thought he was a fire elemental disguised as a man, since that was what he saw when he looked at him in astral space. He was tragically wrong. It could have been an honest error, or it could have been a delusion brought on by his jazz habit.

On another occasion while fighting some gangers in an auto body shop, he cast a fireball that destroyed an acetylene tank. The tank blew through the wall and the boiler for the attached apartment complex went up with it. The resulting fire gutted the building and killed ten, including three children.

- That is, of course, a clear violation of the group's strictures, which would mess of the magic group's contact with their guiding spirit.
- Jimmy No

- Yes, it would. The group would either have to exile him, or he would have to do some sort of penance to appease the spirit. Given his dedication to the cause, I expect he did everything in his power to take the latter path, but the group may not have been persuaded.
- Lyran

He was kicked out of the Band of the White Hand and disappeared from the Seattle shadow scene. Recently, he's been seen in Germany and Turkey. It is rumored he might be doing contract work for a Seattle businessman named Mr. McPherson.

- He is also a person of interest in a couple of Mafia slayings that happened right around the time he cut down the man on the roof. One of them was killed with a single attack from a large-bladed weapon wielded by a taller-than-average person. That's not conclusive by any means, but it is at least indicative.
- Kay St. Irregular

LOKI

MALE TROLL

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
6	3	4	7	6	4	4	2	6	3	6

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/11
Limits	Physical 8, Mental 6, Social 6
Armor	16
Active Skills	Arcana 6, Assensing 6, Automatics 4, Banishing 3, Binding 6, Blades 8, Con 2, Counterspelling 8, Gymnastics 5, Perception 5, Spellcasting 8, Summoning 8
Knowledge Skills	Astral Planes 3, Gang Territories 3, Magical Theory 4, Magical Threats 5, Spirits 4
Languages	English N (Cityspeak)
Qualities	Addiction (Moderate, Jazz), Focused Concentration 3, Gremlins 3, Hermetic Mage
Initiate Grade	2
Metamagics	Masking, Quickening
Gear	Jazz (10 doses), light security armor, power focus (Force 3, ring), weapon focus (Force 5, naginata), 20 drams of reagents
Spells	Agony, Detect Life, Fireball, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Increased Reflexes (quickened, w/ 4 successes), Mind Link (Extended), Powebolt, Stabilize, Stunball
Bound Spirits	Fire spirit (Force 5, 3 services)
Weapons	AK-97 [Assault rifle, Acc 5, 10P, AP –4, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 38(c), w/ APDS ammo] Naginata [Pole arm, Acc 5, Reach 3, DV 10P, AP –2]

LOKI

MALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
7	3	5	4	7	2

Condition Monitor	12/11
Armor	5
Skills	Conjuring 3 + W, Sorcery 3 + W, Astral Combat 2 + W, Firearms 3 + A
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 Fireball (Spell. Damage 6P, Defense = A + L, damages multiple targets) Heal (Spell. Heal 1 box for every hit on a Sorcery + Willpower test)
Qualities	Combat Junkie, Spirit Affinity (spirit of fire), Spirit Whisperer
Gear	Fifty drams of reagents, magical lodge materials
Weapons	AK-97 [DV 8P, Close OK, Near OK, Far –2] Naginata [DV8P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

STOCKWELL

Stockwell was kind enough to agree to an interview, so here it is:

Sunshine: So where are you from?

Stockwell: I was born in a poor Italian neighborhood in Seattle. It was and remains a Mafia neighborhood.

Sunshine: What was it like growing up in those surroundings?

Stockwell: What the Don thought about you was just as important as where your next meal would come from. And being a family of trolls, we thought a lot about where our next meal was coming from. My father ran a small shop and paid protection. It was part of the price of doing business. He said he didn't mind, because he felt very safe.

Sunshine: Did he protect you from all that stuff, or did some of it trickle down to the kid level.

Stockwell: I could take care of myself pretty well, so it wasn't a big issue. I was one of the biggest on the block from a young age. I was quite the punk when you get down to it. Thought I was better than everyone else. I loved professional wrestling and used the moves on the other kids to prove how tough I was. Started using novacoke to get an edge, which put you in a weird place with the Don. He was selling the stuff, so it was nice for his bottom line, but he didn't respect people who teetered over the line from recreational use to addiction. If he saw me using more than he thought was appropriate—whatever that might be—it would hurt his view of me and my family.

Sunshine: How did your parents take that?

Stockwell: Well, I have to admit I didn't keep things under control. I went past the Don's line, and my parents couldn't help but notice. Eventually, my mother pleaded with the Don to help me. I don't know what she promised or said, but he agreed to help me get clean. He may not have had a lot of respect for what I had done to myself, but he saved my life. It wasn't easy or quick. It was three years of setbacks and fighting it, but eventually I kicked the habit for good.

Sunshine: What happened from there?

Stockwell: Like I said, I knew he had saved my life. I was indebted to him and the family. I knew it, and he knew it, and that formed the basis of our relationship.

Sunshine: You joined the family, then.

Stockwell: No, fate intervened at that point. The

Don's daughter was kidnapped. I got a group of runners together and we tracked down the people behind it and rescued her.

Sunshine: So you went into the shadows—but you still had a Mob connection. Are they still your primary clients?

Stockwell: I wouldn't say primary, not any more. I am still loyal to the family, but I've made a lot of different contacts in my time, and some of them have led me to work. Now, jobs call from all over.

Sunshine: You're still here in Seattle?

Stockwell: I live in Seattle, but have been all around the world and seen a lot of amazing things.

Sunshine: What kinds of things?

Stockwell: I went to an island that just appeared outside the Puget Sound. There were small animals, like you'd expect, but also things that were almost all teeth, and these long arms reaching out of nothing, always trying to grab you. Almost got stuck on it when it disappeared. Unfortunately, some mercs we were with didn't make it off in time. It's tough to find much official word about any of this, because pretty much everyone involved has no idea how to talk about it.

- Was that the alchera that appeared off the coast of Seattle a while back?
- Jimmy No

- Sounds like it. He's right that official reports are tough to come by, but I've heard rumors—including a foggy, stony beach where a man in a three-piece suit sat at a small table serving tea. I have no idea what was up with that whole thing.
- Sunshine

Sunshine: Anything else?

Stockwell: I've killed vampires and rescued some people from vats in an MCT facility here in Seattle. Just to keep life interesting, you know?

Sunshine: What are your plans now?

Stockwell: I've still got plenty of work, but I've started thinking about my life after the shadows and how I can continue to help the family. I opened a restaurant, La Bella Piastra, and it's starting to do well. It was mainly a Mafia hangout, but we've started making a name on the restaurant scene.

Sunshine: I'll have to try it next time I'm in Seattle.

Stockwell: Please do. Let me know and I'll comp your meal.

Sunshine: You aren't that old. Why are you thinking of retiring already?

Stockwell: The team I run with has seen some turnover recently. It's the shadows—people die, or they move on. It's part of life, but you know it makes you think. You may be good, you may even be great, but you can't dodge every bullet, and survival can be a matter of a few millimeters in the wrong direction. I don't want to wait to quit until the odds fall against me.

Sunshine: Makes sense. So you have worries about your own mortality, plus some of the stress that comes with team turnover.

Stockwell: Yeah, replacing people is hard, replacing good people is harder. The big one is we haven't had any luck with a face. If you need a job, I'll put in a good word for you.

Sunshine: I'm good, but thanks for the offer.

Stockwell: You can't blame a guy for trying. Seriously though, I've started working on social skills to fill the void. Also, I started looking for new talent. I set them up and find them small jobs, working as a fixer for them.

Sunshine: Outside talent for the family.

Stockwell: Sometimes. Or helping with the team I normally run with. If I hear of other work, I'll pass it along to them also.

STOCKWELL

MALE TROLL

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
10 (12)	4	3 (4)	6	4	3	3	3	2.8	4

Initiative	7 + 2D6
Condition Monitor	14/10
Limits	Physical 9(10), Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	18
Active Skills	Con 2, First Aid 2, Freefall 4, Gymnastics 4, Intimidation 5, Longarms 4, Negotiation 4, Perception 3, Running 3, Sneaking 3, Throwing Weapons 3, Unarmed Combat 6
Knowledge Skills	Mafia Politics 4, Organized Crime 3
Languages	English N
Qualities	Community Connection, Guts, Martial Arts (MMA wrestling), Photographic Memory
Augmentations	Bone lacing (aluminum), smartlink, wired reflexes 1
Gear	Full body armor, Transys Avalon, 5 x stim patches (Rating 5), medkit (Rating 6), 5 x trauma patches, 3 x HE grenades, 5 x frag grenades
Maneuvers	Crushing Jaws
Weapons	Enfield AS-7 [Shotgun, Acc 4(5), DV 11S(e), AP –1, SA/BF, RC —, 24(d), w/ Stick-n-Shock ammo]

STOCKWELL

MALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS	
S	[illegible]
A	4
W	4
L	3
C	3
EDG	4
Condition Monitor	[illegible]
Armor	[illegible]
Skills	Close Combat 4 + A, Firearms 3 + A, (Ground) 3 + A
Shadow Amps	Essence 4 Aluminum Bone Lacing (Cyberware. –2 to damage taken, –1 Essence) Wired Reflexes 1 (Cyberware. +1 attack, –1 Essence)
Qualities	Better Feared than Loved, Guts
Gear	Stim patches, trang patches, Transys Avalon
Weapons	Enfield AS-7 shotgun [DV 9P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —; at Close range can take –2 to attack to opponents]

JUANITA "WYNWARD" GONZALEZ

Juanita was born in the late 2050s to two human parents. While it has become less common for human parents to have ork children, it still happens. Her parents were happy to have a daughter, even though the Japanese control of Lima, Peru made it harder since she was a metahuman. They both resented the Japanacorps' control and helped the Shining Path.

With the birth of Juanita, they started helping more. On Juanita's fifth birthday, they quit their jobs. They debated moving into the jungle, but their Shining Path contacts convinced them to stay in Lima and continue their work. While talking with one of the contacts, they found that Juanita was magically active. The contact took them in and promised to help train Juanita in exchange for their continued help. After testing and attempts at training, it was discovered that Juanita could summon and work with spirits, but she couldn't use sorcery or other forms of magic. At first they thought she wouldn't be of much use, but she showed ingenuity in how she used the spirits to get around her lack of other abilities.

The Shining Path thought she might be destined to become one of the priestesses for the new Incan movement. They convinced her parents to take her to Machu Picchu, where they began helping rebuild the city while Juanita continued training.

One day, however, she realized that becoming a priestess wasn't her true calling, and she just walked out of the camp into the jungle. Instead of traveling back to Lima, she headed for Cajamarca. Once there, she blended into the poor masses. The poverty was depressing, as it tends to be, but Juanita had a strong will. She was determined to find a way to make it better. Using spirits to rob the rich, she stole enough money to buy a fake SIN and ticket out of Peru.

When she landed in Lexington, UCAS, she lost herself in the Latino community. It took time, but she found her way until she befriended a Cat shaman who hired her to work in his talismonger shop. She learned about reagents and more about different types of spirits. After a couple of years, she found she wanted more and started using her spirits to help on the streets, managing to foil the plans of a blood mage terrorizing the community.

She has expanded her expertise in both reagent gathering and conjuring, to the point where she has a considerable reputation throughout Kentucky. She has developed a knack for finding ghost orchids in Boone Forest, and she's not just leaving her hunts to chance. She is regularly summoning spirits to imbue the land with power, hoping to create the type of elevated mana areas where ghost orchids grow. She has found enough reagents both to keep herself well supplied and to make good money selling the excess.

- She's stayed independent for a while; we'll see how long that lasts. The Atlantean Foundation is CAS-based, remember, and while there's a good six hundred kilometers between Lexington and Atlanta, that's certainly not so large a distance so that they would not have heard of her, or be interested in bringing her in for a conversation.
- Elijah

JUANITA "WYNWARD" GONZALEZ

FEMALE ORK

SR5 STATS										
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
[illegible]	[illegible]	4	4	[illegible]	4	3	5	6	4	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/11
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 6, Social 8
Armor	12
Active Skills	Arcana 4, Banishing 8, Binding 9, Con 4, First Aid 4, Leadership 3, Negotiation 6, Perception 5, Pistols 3, Sneaking 5, Summoning 8
Knowledge Skills	Peru History 4, Spirit Types 4
Languages	Spanish N, English 4 (Cityspeak +2), Portuguese 2
Qualities	Aspected Shaman (conjuring)
Initiate Grade	2
Metamagics	Invocation, Masking
Gear	Armored jacket, 25 drams of reagents, Transys Avalon
Bound Spirits	Spirit of air (Force 6, 3 services), spirit of earth (Force 6, 2 services), spirit of fire (Force 4, 6 services)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo]

JUANITA "WYNWARD" GONZALEZ

FEMALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS					
S	A	W	L	C	EDG
4	3	6	4	5	4

Condition Monitor	
Armor	9
Skills	Conjuring 5 + W, Firearms 4 + A, Negotiation 4 + C
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 Awakened Summoning focus (focus, can summon an additional spirit) Team Player (social, you can freely gift your own plot points and edge)
Qualities	Catlike, Iron Will
Gear	Fifty drams of reagents, Transys Avalon
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —]

MAKING A TROG RUNNER

Trolls and orks are more than just the group muscle. With ingenuity and planning, they can make effective, enjoyable, and memorable characters of any type. Thinking outside the box with a troll technomancer or ork social adept will provide twists to the Sixth World and can help make characters that are remembered.

It isn't difficult to make one of these memorable characters. A clear goal of what they will excel in will open doors sometimes thought to be closed to trolls and orks. Here are some examples of these characters, and some ideas to allow you to make memorable characters of your own.

These basic templates show some of the examples of what is possible in making ork and troll characters. The builds are flexible—it's fairly simple to switch any of the mage builds to a technomancer, or vice versa, by swapping Magic and Resonance and reworking the spells and skills appropriately. To personalize the character, you can change out positive and negative qualities to fit the background you create. Just remember, you can't have more than 25 points worth of either positive or negative qualities.

If you want to move Attributes around to improve the associated skills, you can do this by adding and subtracting evenly if you follow two simple rules: First, ensure that you don't exceed the racial maximums (or go below the minimums); second, remember you can only start with one Attribute at the racial maximum.

CYNTHIA "SPOOK" FIELDS

TROLL TECHNOMANCER

Priority A	Metatype
Priority B	Skills
Priority C	Magic/Resonance
Priority D	Attributes
Priority E	Resources

CYNTHIA "SPOOK" FIELDS

SR5 STATS										
B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	R
5	3	3	5	3	4	4	7	6	2	6

Initiative	7 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	13
Active Skills	Compiling 5, Computer 3, Cybercombat 5, Decompiling 5, Gymnastics 2, Hacking 5, Locksmith 3, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Pistols 4, Registering 5, Sneaking 2, Software 5
Knowledge Skills	GOD Procedures 4, Hacker Hangouts 4, Seattle Area Knowledge 4, Seattle Gangs 4
Languages	English N
Qualities	Natural Hardening, Uncouth
Gear	Armored jacket, Sony Emperor, 10 stealth tags, credstick, 50 rounds APDS ammo, 100 rounds regular ammo, 100 rounds Stick-n-Shock ammo
Complex Forms	Cleaner, Infusion of Attack, Pulse Storm, Puppeteer, Resonance Channel, Resonance Spike, Static Veil,
Registered Sprites	Crack sprite (Rating 6, 2 tasks), Fault sprite (Rating 6, 2 tasks)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo]

When the tests at school revealed Cynthia was a technomancer, everyone was surprised, since she'd never showed any interest in technology or commlinks. In fact, she'd failed her first test on using a commlink. What no one realized was that she didn't understand it because it seemed so backward to her. Why use technology for what she could do with her mind?

Her parents feared what would be done to her in the name of "testing," so they disappeared with her, leaving their low-paying jobs. As they moved around Seattle, Cynthia learned more about the

Matrix until she began to prefer it to meeting people in person. She became more and more socially awkward, and when her parents died in a car accident, she set out on her own to find her place in the world.

JON "MIST" POWELL	
ORK INFILTRATOR	
Priority A	Attributes
Priority B	Metatype
Priority C	Skills
Priority D	Resources
Priority E	Magic

JON "MIST" POWELL

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
5	5	3	4	5	5	4	5	3.6	5

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/11
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 7, Social 7
Armor	12
Active Skills	Blades 1, Con 4, Disguise 2, Etiquette 3, Gymnastics 2, Impersonation 2, Locksmith 3, Negotiation 3, Perception 3, Performance 3, Pilot Ground Craft 1, Pistols 2, Throwing Weapons 2
Knowledge Skills	Celebrity Gossip 3, Seattle Bars 3, Security Procedures 4, Security Systems 4 , Urban Brawl 2
Languages	English N (Corp)
Qualities	Addiction (Mild, deepweed), Bad Luck, First Impression, Low Pain Tolerance, Photographic Memory, Quick Healer
Augmentations	Smartlink
Gear	Armored jacket, chameleon suit, climbing gear, autopicker (Rating 6), cellular glove molder (Rating 4), lockpick set, maglock passkey (Rating 4), keycard copier (Rating 6), 100 rounds regular ammo, 50 rounds APDS ammo, 50 round Stick-n-Shock, Hermes Ikon, binoculars (Capacity 3, w/ thermographic vision, vision magnification, flare compensation), directional mic (Capacity 3, w/ audio enhancement 2, select sound filter 1), sequencer (Rating 4), rappelling gloves, 100 meters mircrowire, 100 meters standard rope, 100 meters myomeric rope, medkit (Rating 6)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo]

Jon grew up the smallest of the four boys, even though he was the oldest. He found he had a knack for remembering things, especially faces. Knowing he would have to rely on more than just his brawn, he quickly learned he was better at talking his way out of trouble than fighting his way out. It wasn't long before he realized he could talk his way *into* places even better. By keeping a low profile, he's been able to find out all kinds of useful information.

NANCY "BLACKLIGHT" BARNES	
TROLL ADEPT ASSASSIN	
Priority A	Metatype
Priority B	Skills
Priority C	Attributes
Priority D	Magic
Priority E	Resources

NANCY "BLACKLIGHT" BARNES

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
7	4	3(4)	8	3	3	2	2	6	2	6

Initiative	7 + 3D6
Condition Monitor	12/10
Limits	Physical 9(10), Mental 4, Social 5
Armor	13
Active Skills	Arcana 2, Automatics 5, Blades 3, Con 3, Etiquette 2, Gymnastics 5, Intimidation 3, Locksmith 3, Longarms 5, Perception 5, Pilot Ground Craft 1, Pistols 5, Sneaking 5, Throwing Weapons 3, Tracking 5
Knowledge Skills	Metahuman Hate Groups 3, Seattle Bars 2, Seattle Gangs 2, Silent Killing Techniques 3
Languages	English N
Qualities	Blandness, Code of Honor (won't kill innocents), Uncouth
Adept Powers	Combat Sense (level 1), Danger Sense (level 2), Improved ability (Sneaking, level 1), Increased Reflexes (level 2), Mystic Armor (level 1), Spell Resistance (level 3)
Gear	Armored jacket, bound qi focus (Rating 2, Attribute Boost [Agility] level 2, lightning bolt on left forearm), chameleon suit, 100 rounds of APDS ammo, 100 rounds of gel ammo, 100 rounds of regular ammo, 5 flash bang grenades, contacts (Capacity 2, flare compensation, smartlink)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo] Katana [Sword, Acc 7, Reach 1, DV 11P, AP –2]

When a fight between Nancy and a Humanis Policlub member quickly escalated, neither one was willing to back down. Before Nancy knew it,

the Humanis member was lying dead in in a pool of blood on the street. Nancy knew it didn't matter that she'd acted in self-defense, that she was only fifteen, or that she was a girl—the important things were that she was a poor troll and was friends with several Halloweeners. Knight Errant would blame her—she knew it. What concerned her more was that she had enjoyed beating the man to death. She started taking contract killings to feed this feeling, and she killed anyone who got in her way. Over time, though, she started seeing the impact of the people she killed, sometimes running with teammates who were still mourning the people she had taken out. The human cost impressed itself on her, and she vowed to never kill an innocent again.

KIM "MYSTIQUE" PETTEYS

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
4	1	1	1	5	4	3	2	6	1	6

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	12/10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 6, Social 5
Armor	12
Active Skills	Alchemy 4, Arcana 4, Assensing 4, Automatics 4, Banishing 5, Binding 5, Blades 3, Computer 3, Counterspelling 5, Gymnastics 4, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Pistol 3, Sneaking 3, Spellcasting 5, Summoning 5
Knowledge Skills	Magic Theory 3, Magical Groups 4, Reagent Sourcing 4, Seattle Night Clubs 3
Languages	English N
Qualities	Allergy (Mild, Silver), Astral Beacon, Mentor Spirit (Eagle, Adept), Focused Concentration 5, Weak Immune System
Adept Powers	Astral Perception, Danger Sense (level 2), Improved Ability (Sneaking, level 1), Pain Resistance (level 2), Mystic Armor (level 2), Rapid Healing (level 2), Spell Resistance (level 2)
Gear	Armored jacket, 200 rounds regular ammo, 50 drams reagents, 5 flash-bang grenades, 40 rounds of explosive ammo, Renraku Sensai
Spells	Analyze Truth, Detect Enemies, Detect Magic, Fireball, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Increased Reflexes, Lightning Bolt, Mindlink
Preparations	Armor, Increased Reflexes, Stunball
Bound Spirits	Spirit of fire (Force 6, 3 services)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo] AK-97 [Assault Rifle, Acc 5, DV 10P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 32(c), w/ regular ammo]

KIM "MYSTIQUE" PETTEYS

ORK MYSTIC ADEPT

Priority A	Magic
Priority B	Skills
Priority C	Metatype
Priority D	Attributes
Priority E	Resources

Having grown up in a poor neighborhood of Seattle, Kim learned from a young age that she would only ever get what she took for herself. It became easier as she gradually came to a realization of the full extent of her powers. On one job, she learned how she could will herself transparent. On another, she caught a bullet in her shoulder but came out of it with only a scratch, because somehow she made armor out of nothing. She learned how to anticipate what was coming, how to see the unseen, and how to absolutely devastate the hell out of anyone who got in her way. If it involves magic, she can either do it, or she'll earn the money to buy it. You won't find too many street mages with her wide array of weapons.

JACK "SPADES" LINDSTROM

TROLL ASPECTED MAGE

Priority A	Metatype
Priority B	Skills
Priority C	Magic
Priority D	Resources
Priority E	Attributes

JACK "SPADES" LINDSTROM

Jack grew up an avid poker player, and he won a large hand with a spades flush while waiting in a safe house during his first run, giving him his street name. His running style resembles his poker strategy—pummel anyone who shows weakness with a lot of firepower, and don't leave them waiting around to see if they can squeak out a bit of luck or wear you down. He doesn't know a wide range of

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
5	3	3	5	4	4	2	2	6	3	6

Initiative	5 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	13
Active Skills	Automatics 2, Computer 3, Counterspelling 5, First Aid 6, Gymnastics 5, Locksmith 4, Longarms 2, Perception 5, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Pistol 2, Ritual Spellcasting 5, Sneaking 4, Spellcasting 5, Throwing Weapons 4
Knowledge Skills	Magical Threats 3, Poker 3, Seattle Area Knowledge 2
Languages	English, Japanese 2, Spanish 2
Qualities	Criminal SIN, Mentor Spirit (Wolf), Spirit Bane (Spirit of Air)
Gear	Armored jacket, Erika Elite, spell focus (Combat, Rating 4), 200 rounds regular ammo, 100 rounds Stick-n-Shock ammo, 100 rounds APDS ammo, 10 flash bang grenades, 10 high explosive grenades
Spells	Fireball, Heal, Improved Invisibility, Lightning Bolt, Powerbolt
Vehicles	Ford Americar (Ground Craft. Handl 4/3, Speed 3, Accel 2, Bod 11, Armor 6, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 4) Harley-Davidson Scorpion (Ground Craft, Handl 4/3, Speed 4, Accel 2, Bod 8, Armor 9, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 1)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo] AK-97 [Assault Rifle, Acc 5, DV 10P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 32(c), w/ regular ammo]

spells, and while he has some infiltration ability, he usually uses it to get close enough to throw stuff in people's faces, rather than sneak in and sneak out. His mentor spirit, Wolf, encourages this sort of approach to his shadow life.

ANDY "BURNER" WU

TROLL MAGE

Priority A	Magic
Priority B	Metatype
Priority C	Skills
Priority D	Attributes
Priority E	Resources

ANDY "BURNER" WU

Andy got the nickname "Burner" when he burned what he thought were two thieves breaking into his house with a Flamethrower spell. Unfortunately for him, they weren't thieves—they were corporate security. A mage had mind-controlled them, forcing them to break in, though this never came up in the investigation. The mage was a powerful member of the corporate R&D team, and he kept control over the flow of information moving to law enforcement. The cover-up painted the picture of Andy resisting arrest and labeled him a murderer. He escaped and fled Denver.

The fear of striking out at the wrong person has stayed with him ever since, making him freeze at the beginning of combat, but once things get going, he holds his own. He's also started looking for ways to right the wrongs done by other people like him, when magic is used without control.

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG	M
5	3	3	5	5	4	3	2	1	4	4

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 6, Mental 6, Social 5
Armor	13
Active Skills	Arcana 3, Assensing 3, Binding 4, Blades 4, Counterspelling 5, Gymnastics 2, Perception 4, Pilot Ground Craft 2, Pistol 3, Running 2, Spellcasting 5, Summoning 4, Swimming 2, Throwing Weapons 3
Knowledge Skills	Astral Planes 3, Magic Threats 3, Shedim 4
Languages	English N, Mandarin 4
Qualities	Astral Chameleon, Combat Paralysis
Gear	Armored jacket, 20 drams reagents, 100 rounds regular ammo, 10 smoke grenades, Renraku Sensei
Spells	Analyze Magic, Armor, Detect Life, Fireball, Flamethrower, Heal, Hot Potato, Improved Invisibility, Increase Agility, Increase Reflexes, Manaball, Mind Link, Powerbolt
Bound Spirits	Spirit of earth (Force 6, 3 services), spirit of fire (Force 6, 3 services)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo] Katana [Sword, Acc 7, Reach 1, DV 8P, AP –2]

ANTHONY "TUSKS" TORTENELLI

ORK FACE

Priority A	Attributes
Priority B	Skills
Priority C	Metatype
Priority D	Resources
Priority E	Magic

BRODY "SPEEDBUMP" ALEXANDER

ORK RIGGER

Priority A	Resources
Priority B	Skills
Priority C	Metatype
Priority D	Attributes
Priority E	Magic

ANTHONY "TUSKS" TORTENELLI

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
5	4	4	5	4	4	4	0	5.6	1

Initiative	8 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 7, Mental 6, Social 8
Armor	12
Active Skills	Automatics 4, Con 5, Disguise 4, Etiquette 5, First Aid 5, Gymnastics 4, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5, Negotiation 5, Perception 5, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Sneaking 4, Throwing Weapons 4
Knowledge Skills	Goblin Rock Bands 3, Seattle Fixers 4, Seattle Nightclubs 3, Seattle Runners 3
Languages	English N, Or'zet 3
Qualities	Exceptional Attribute (Charisma), Bad Luck, Prejudice (human, biased)
Augmentations	Tailored Pheromones 1
Gear	Armored jacket, contacts (Capacity 1, smartlink), Dodge Scoot, Erika Elite, medkit (Rting 6), 100 rounds regular ammo, 100 rounds APDS ammo, 100 rounds Stick-n-Shock ammo, 100 rounds gel ammo
Weapons	Colt M23 [Assault Rifle, Acc 4, DV 9P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 40(c), w/ regular ammo] HK-227[SMG, Acc 5(7), 7P, AP —, SA/BF/FA, RC (1), 28(c), w/ regular ammo]

A charmer and fast talker from a young age, Anthony would rather talk then fight. He could sell ice to an Athabaskan, as the saying goes. This usually works fine for him, but he sometimes has to deal with the obstacle of humans who believe he's up to no good just because he's an ork. This caused him to become jaded toward humans. He knew the corporate life wasn't for him, and soon was running the shadows.

BRODY "SPEEDBUMP" ALEXANDER

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
5	4	5(8)	4	3	2	3	2	1.8	1

Initiative	8(11) + 2D6
Condition Monitor	11/10
Limits	Physical 6(7), Mental 5, Social 4
Armor	12
Active Skills	Automatics 4, Computer 3, Electronic Warfare 5, Engineering skill group 5, First Aid 3, Gunnery 5, Navigation 3, Pilot Aircraft 5, Pilot Ground Craft 5, Pilot Watercraft 3
Knowledge Skills	GridGuide Knowledge 2, Smuggling Routes 4, Vehicle Makes and Models 4
Languages	English N
Qualities	Juryrigger, Low Pain Tolerance
Augmentations	Control rig 2 (alphaware), reaction enhancers 2, simrig, smartlink, wired reflexes 1 (alpha)
Gear	Armored jacket, Proteus Poseidon, Transys Avalon, 1,000 rounds of regular ammo, 200 rounds APDS ammo, 100 rounds Stick-n-Shock ammo, 10 high explosive grenades
Vehicles and Drones	C-D Dalmatian (Large Drone, Handl 5, Speed 5, Accel 3, Bod 5, Armor 5, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) Ford Americar (Ground Craft, Handl 4/3, Speed 3, Accel 2, Bod 11, Armor 6, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 4) 2 x Lockheed Optic-X2 (Small Drone, Handl 4, Speed 4, Accel 1, Bod 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) GM-Nissan Doberman (Medium Drone, Handl 5, Speed 3, Accel 1, Bod 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) GMC Bulldog (Ground Craft, Handl 3/3, Speed 3, Accel 1, Bod 16, Armor 12, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 6) MCT Fly-Spy (Minidrone, Handl 4, Speed 3, Accel 2, Body 1, Armor 0, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) MCT-Nissan Roto-Drone (Medium Drone, Handl 4, Speed 4, Accel 2, Bod 4, Armor 4, Pilot 3, Sensor 3) Steel Lynx (Large Drone, Handl 5, Speed 4, Accel 2, Bod 6, Armor 12, Pilot 3, Sensor 3)
Weapons	AK-97 [Assault Rifle, Acc 5, DV 10P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC —, 32(c), w/ regular ammo] Stoner-Ares M202 [Light Machine Gun, Acc 5, DV 10P, AP –3, FA, RC —, 100 (belt), w/ regular ammo mounted on the steel lynx] Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5(7), DV 11P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), w/regular ammo mounted to rotodrone] Grenade launcher [Acc 4(6), DV 16P, AP –2, Modes SS, RC —, 6(c), High Explosive]

Growing up, Brody enjoyed only one thing more than working on vehicles, and that was driving. He was remotely piloting drones before he was a teenager. When most of his friends were studying to get their driver's licenses, he was using Fly-Spy drones. He knew he wouldn't be able to find a job that would pay for his toys, so he started taking on jobs that used the toys he liked to play with. Initially he worked as a remote pilot, then later as the driver. Like any passionate rigger, he is constantly tinkering with his drones in an effort to make them better.

JILL "PROTEAN" ANDREWS

ORK GUNSLINGER

Priority A	Skills
Priority B	Metatype
Priority C	Resources
Priority D	Attributes
Priority E	Magic

JILL "PROTEAN" ANDREWS

Jill grew up in the Barrens. She worked anywhere she could, doing whatever was needed to make some extra money for the family. When she was old enough, she joined the UCAS military and learned how to use weapons and how to kill. These skills came easily to her, and she was soon leading a platoon. When her parents were killed by an Alamos 20,000 cell, she went AWOL and hunted them down. Instead of returning to the military after she killed them, she chose to use her skills to run the shadows.

SR5 STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	EDG
4	4	3	1	3	4	3	3	4.4	5

Initiative	6 + 1D6
Condition Monitor	10/10
Limits	Physical 5, Mental 5, Social 5
Armor	12
Active Skills	Blades 4, Demolitions 4, Disguise 2, Engineering skill group 2, Firearms skill group 2, First Aid 3, Gunnery 3, Gymnastics 5, Heavy Weapons 3, Leadership 2, Locksmith 4, Outdoors skill group 3, Nautical Engineering 2, Perception 5, Pilot Ground Craft 3, Sneaking 4, Throwing Weapons 4, Unarmed Combat 5
Knowledge Skills	Mercenary Groups 3, Native American Nations Politics 3, Seattle Gangs 3, Small Unit Tactics 3
Languages	English N, Or'zet N, Sioux 2
Qualities	Bilingual, Criminal SIN
Augmentations	Smartlink, wired reflexes (betaware)
Gear	Armored jacket (w/ nonconductivity 3 thermal dampening 3), autopicker (Rating 6), bug scanner (Rating 6), directional jammer (Rating 6), Hermes Ikon, goggles (Capacity 2, w/ flare compensation, thermographic vision), lockpick set, maglock (Rating 5), maglock passkey (Rating 4), medkit (Rating 6), sequencer (Rating 4), white noise generator (Rating 6), 100 rounds regular ammo, 10 HE grenades (for Ares Alpha), 20 smoke grenades, 100 rounds APDS ammo
Vehicles	GMC Bulldog (Ground Craft, Handl 3/3, Speed 3, Accel 1, Bod 16, Armor 12, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 6) Harley-Davidson Scorpion (Ground Craft, Handl 4/3, Speed 4, Accel 2, Bod 8, Armor 9, Pilot 1, Sensor 2, Seats 1)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [Heavy Pistol, Acc 5(7), DV 8P, AP –1, SA, RC —, 15(c), w/ regular ammo] Ares Alpha [Assault Rifle, Acc 5(7), DV 11P, AP –2, SA/BF/FA, RC 2, 42 (c), w/regular ammo] Grenade launcher [Acc 4(6), DV 16P, AP –2, SS, RC —, 6(c), w/ high-explosive] Katana [Sword, Acc 7, Reach 1, DV 6P, AP –3] 3 x Survival knife [Knife, Acc 5 Reach —, DV 5P, AP –1]

SHADOWRUN: ANARCHY TROG CHARACTERS

Building an ork or troll character *in Shadowrun: Anarchy* is easy. The power level of the campaign you are playing in will determine if you can round out the character, or must make them a bit more focused. Shown here are a few different ideas for each of the power levels.

GANG-LEVEL GAME

JAMIE GARRISON

MALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
3	4	3	4	5	1

Condition Monitor	10/10
Armor	4
Skills:	Firearms 4 + A, Con 3 + C, Stealth 3 + A
Shadow Amps	Essence 5 Jack of All Trades (Social. Reroll 1 failed die when rolling a skill you don't have) Smartlink (Cyberware. +1 firearms or heavy weapons, –1 Essence) Team Player (Social. You may freely gift edge or plot points)
Qualities	Catlike, Lifelong Thief, Silver Tongue
Gear	Armored vest, fake SIN, Hermes Ikon, trauma patches
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —]

AMY CHU

FEMALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
4	4	3	4	3	1

Condition Monitor	11/10
Armor	12
Skills	Close Combat 3 + A, Biotech 3 + L, Firearms 3 + A
Shadow Amps	Essence 4.5 Dermal Plating 2 (Cyberware. Reduce damage by 2, –1 Essence) Bioware Arms 1 (Bioware. Reroll 1 die agility tests, –0.5 essence)
Qualities	Indomitable (firearms), Tough as Nails (physical), SINer (UCAS)
Gear	Armored vest, fake SIN, medkit, survival kit
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —]

STREET RUNNER GAME

WENDY WILSON

FEMALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
4	4	5	4	4	1

Condition Monitor	10/11
Armor	8
Skills	Conjuring 3 + W, Firearms 3 + A, Negotiation 3 + C, Sorcery 3 + W
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 Awakened Armor (Spell. Target gets 3 additional armor boxes while spell is sustained) Heal (Spell. Heal one box per success on a Sorcery + Wil test, remember to adjust for targets essence) Manabolt (Spell. Combat damage 6P/AA Defense = S + A) ProtectiveAmulet (Talisman. Usage once per day, reduce damage from one attack by half)
Qualities	Gremlins, Mentor Spirit (Wolf), Spirit Whisperer
Gear	Armored vest, Erika Elite, Eurocar Westwind, fake SIN, fake license (Ares Predator V)
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —] Katana [DV 6P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

MIKE GRABOWSKI

MALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
5	5	4	5	4	1

Condition Monitor	12/10
Armor	9
Skills:	Biotech 2 +A, Firearms 3 + A, Hacking 4 + L, Tasking 3 + L
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 Emerged Cleaner (Complex form. Keep the last 3 matrix actions from being seen by G.O.D.) Pulse Storm (Complex form. Make a cybercombat attack, each net hit gives target -1 to all actions) Stitches (Complex form. Make a Tasking + Logic test each hit heals 1 point of damage to target sprite) Resonance Spike (Complex form. Cybercombat, Matrix damage = 8, defense = Logic + Firewall) More Where that Came From (Gear. 2 additional weapons)
Qualities	Gearhead, Go Big or Go Home, Paranoia
Gear	Armored vest, electronics toolkit, fake SIN, Transys Avalon
Weapons	Ares Predator V [DV 6P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —] HK-227 [DV 6P, Close OK, Near OK, Far —] Ruger 100 [DV 9P, Close –4, Near –2, OK] Stun Baton [DV 7S, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

ALICE NICHOLS

FEMALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
7	5	4	3	4	3

Condition Monitor	12/13
Armor	13
Skills	Close Combat 4 + A, Firearms 4 + A, Stealth 3 + A
Shadow Amps	Custom Lined Coat (Gear. –3 perception for all items in the coat, 10 armor) Dermal Plating 1 (Cyberware. Reduce damage taken by 1, –1 Essence) Wired Reflexes 1 (Cyberware. +1 attack, –1 Essence)
Qualities	Catlike, Combat Junkie, Toughness
Gear	Frag grenades, Hermes Ikon, trauma patches
Weapons	Ares Alpha [DV 8P, Close OK, Near OK, Far –2] Combat Axe [DV 7P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

VINCE FINN

MALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
5	5	5	4	4	4

Condition Monitor	11/11
Armor	12
Skills:	Con 3 + C, Disguise 2 + C, Firearms 2 + A, Negotiation 3 + C, Stealth 1 + A
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 Awakened Kinetics (Adept. +2 dice on negotiation rolls) Mystic Armor (Adept. Ignore 1 point of armor damage every time your armor is about to absorb damage)
Qualities	Combat Paralysis, Lucky, Silver Tongue
Gear	Area signal jammer, armored vest, disguise kit, enhanced vision goggles, fake SIN
Weapons	Defiance T-250 [DV 9P, Close OK, Near –2, Far —; at Close range, may take –2 dice pool penalty to attack 2 targets at half damage] Survival knife [DV 4P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

GUINEVERE MCDONALD

FEMALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
4	5	5	6	4	2

Condition Monitor	10/11
Armor	15
Skills	Athletics 2 + A, Con 2 + C, Electronics 2 +L, Firearms 4 + A
Shadow Amps	Essence 4.5 Smartlink (Cyberware. +1 die on firearms or heavy weapons rolls, –1 Essence) Tailored Pheromones (Bioware. Reroll 1 die on all in person charisma rolls, –0.5 essence)
Qualities	Biocompatability, Tough as Nails (physical), SINer criminal
Gear	Armor jacket, disguise kit, fake SIN, fine suit, Ford Americar
Weapons	Ares Alpha [DV 8P, Close OK, Near OK, Far –2]

PRIME RUNNER GAME

NICOLE DIOMONTE

FEMALE ORK

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
3	5	3	4	3	3

Condition Monitor	12/13
Armor	12
Skills	Close Combat 4 + A, Electronics 1 + L, Firearms 2 +A, Hacking 6 + L
Shadow Amps	Essence 5 Biofeedback (Program. Deal cybercombat damage to your opponent's physical or matrix condition monitor) Cyberdeck 2 (Matrix. Reroll 1 die on matrix actions, firewall +2, Matrix CM 9, run 1 program) Hammer (Program. +2 damage in cybercombat) Mugger (Program. Can reroll 1 die in cybercombat attacks) Smartlink (Gear. +1 die for firearms or heavy weapons tests) Wired Reflexes 1 (Cyberware. +1 attack or movement. –1 Essence)
Qualities	Ambidextrous, Exceptional Attribute (Logic), Paranoia
Gear	Armored jacket, fake license, fake SIN, frag grenades, hardshell briefcase, Transys Avalon
Weapons	Ares Alpha [DV 8P, Close OK, Near OK, Far –2] Katana [DV 7P, Close OK, Near —, Far —] Survival knife [DV 5P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

PAUL GETZ

MALE TROLL

SR: ANARCHY STATS

S	A	W	L	C	EDG
10	5	3	4	3	5

Condition Monitor	13/13
Armor	12
Skills	Athletics 3 + A, Close Combat 3 + A, Escape Artist 2, Firearms 2 +A, Heavy Weapons 3 + A
Shadow Amps	Essence 6 Awakened Attribute Boost 2 (agility) (Adept. Add 2 dice or 2 damage when using Agility) Killing hands (Adept. Unarmed attacks can do either stun or physical damage) Critical Strike 1 (Adept. Add 1 damage to melee attack) Wall Running (Adept. Can move up or along vertical surfaces during movement)
Qualities	Allergy (pollutants), Guts, Toughness
Gear	Armored vest, fake SIN, Ford Americar, medkit, smoke grenades, Transys Avalon
Weapons	Ares Alpha [DV 8P, Close OK, Near OK, Far –2] Survival Knife [DV 6P, Close OK, Near —, Far —] Katana [DV 8P, Close OK, Near —, Far —]

UNITED WE STOMP
TROG GROUPS & SOCIETIES

Unable to hide his awe, Sallin looked up at the chrome-and-black sign on the door. He had seen the logo before, that shield with horns and the letters S and G fit within its shiny borders. It was the logo on the chest of the security guard that had pulled him out of the rubble after his home collapsed.

It wasn't the first time he'd been in a collapsed building. The buildings where he had grown up, in the Aurora Warrens, weren't in good shape to say the least. There were times when he was only ten years old but still had to get used to the sound of floorboards cracking under his bulk. This time was different, though. This time he had been sleeping and had heard the squeal of tires trying to stop before an explosive crash as the vehicle demolished the front of what was once Lou's Deli but more recently functioned as the first floor of Sallin's flop.

Now it did not function as anything at all.

The troll that had helped him wore the emblem. He had been part of a team protecting some cargo when an attack went wrong. The car was the bad guys. They didn't make it out. But Sallin did. He made it out to another sucky day where he had to go find a new flop. Go get new clothes. Restock his lost food supply. And give up on the chromed-out pistol he had managed to find. It didn't have bullets yet, but he'd been working on it.

But that was all in the past. That was two weeks ago. Since then, he'd stayed with Tanner, the troll who had saved him. And now he had traveled with Tanner across the country to Sweetwater Creek.

It sounded nice to him. Sounded friendly, but he couldn't possibly have imagined it being full of trolls and orks. Standing outside the headquarters of Southern Guard, Tanner was in awe of not only the logo, but the doors. They were big. Troll big. He wasn't going to have to duck to get in. He'd seen a lot of doors like that here.

It was standing at this point, looking up at a door that could fit him, at a company that would accept him, in a place that was filled with people like him, that Sallin Jones, street-kid from Denver, who never had a dream beyond finding enough food to survive the next day, realized that he could be somebody. He could be more than just a street kid and eventually just another troll squatter.

Sallin Jones stepped through the doors of Southern Guard and into a future he never imagined.

COMPILED BY: GOAT FOOT

We can talk about the places trogs live, the big corps that treat them this way or that way, who we look up to, and who we should be wary of, but I think this stuff—the stuff we're about to highlight—is the most important. I'm not knocking the rest of these things, I'm just saying that what trogs have built for themselves, what we do all on our own, is really the thing that people need to see about trogs. I've got some of the best insiders taking a long, hard look at several corps and societies that are *ours*. Trog-owned, trog-run, trog-operated—trogs backing trogs. This is the place to see what we are doing in this world.

SOUTHERN GUARD

POSTED BY: SHERMAN

This Atlanta-based private-security firm employs only orks and trolls. They have no other metatypes anywhere on their payroll, and they point that out proudly with their Matrix advertisements. They are headquartered in the Sweetwater Creek area, as one would expect of anything involving trogs in Atlanta. Their primary clients request them for security jobs, especially at racially sensitive locations or events. Those clients include dozens of metahuman-friendly companies and organizations that are willing to bring in a security detail with a little

social following. They aren't limited to these jobs—this is just what they are best known for thanks to social media, because their big-muscle reputation gets them contracts from all sorts of people who aren't meta-haters. They also provide the police contract for Sweetwater Creek, which prevents other, less-balanced sec corps from harassing them.

- "Less-balanced"—I like that way of saying "racially motivated to crack people's skulls just because they're trogs." It's probably their best bet, because any other sec corp that put boots on these streets would get quickly overwhelmed and have to resort to high levels of violence.
- Stone

From the top down, trolls and orks run this show. The operations chief for the company is Jonathon Hughes, famous Lance Captain for Ares' '71 Desert Wars team that took the light-division championship. He was reassigned to Wolverine Security once his fifteen minutes of fame was up after he got back. He didn't take well to the lack of discipline at Wolverine and found their hyper-violent culture difficult to operate within effectively. After several citations—not the meritorious kind—Hughes found himself released from his Wolverine contract while operating in Atlanta. His SIN reverted to the CAS, and he went from the wilds of Wolverine to the anger of Atlanta. He ended up in Sweetwater Creek and very quickly saw an opportunity to help out the community. Southern Guard was already organized, but they were low on staff and training. Hughes offered his expertise to help the latter, and the former began popping up from inside Sweetwater.

- To this day there are groups that try to slip plants into SG recruits. Every one of them has been a failure. Either they get washed out, or they roll over to SG's side. It's easy to do when you spend six months training and heading out on leave to this trog utopia. The community makes every ork and troll feel like they finally have a place to call home.
- Mihoshi Oni

Below Hughes are his four DCs, Divisional Chiefs, who handle the top levels of marketing, sales, finance, and expansion. They sound like boring corp jobs, but every one of the DCs puts in at least four weeks on actual security work throughout the year, and all of them came up through the ranks. They look forward to the time back in the mix, even though most of the time they get planted in pretty docile spots. This quartet works together like a well-oiled machine. Three of the four have been with SG since the early days, and the fourth is settling in nicely.

- The fourth, Ames Redding, just took on the DC–Expansion role after his predecessor found himself on the wrong side of an armored-car hit while doing his street time. He's a big part of the reason SG got that A rating. Southern Guard is the main corp but Trollgarde (Spain), Five Arms (France), Bulk Armor (England), and Aggro Culture (UCAS) are all subsidiaries, along with a few dozen other non-security firms that folded into Southern Guard for a contract discount. Their growth has been impressive.
- Mr. Bonds

The company operates without a lot of satellite offices and minimal autonomy when it comes to site operations. Everyone answers to Sweetwater directly because they've designed their internal structure without a lot of middle management. Site operational coordinators (known as OpCos), communicate directly with OC Hughes or his assistant Billings. They are all trusted and trained thoroughly so that most of the interactions are after-action reports and a pat on the back, but the occasional job goes sideways and the OpCos need a little advice. It's rare enough that Hughes and Billings are never overwhelmed, but as they grow, the chances of that staying the case are getting slimmer.

- Billings looks like a troll, but he isn't. Billings is a free spirit. A guardian, if the rumor mill is to be trusted. He teamed up with Hughes shortly after his arrival in Sweetwater.

Why the spirit hangs out with the mundane, no clue, but he operates 24/7 as Hughes' assistant, something no metahuman could do.
- Lyran

- In a place of pain, fear is a feast.
- Man-of-Many-Names

- Their SOP leaves room for exploits. Hit several of their sites with sideways ops and overwhelm the up-chatter. The problem is finding folks dumb enough to hit multiple sites all guarded by orks and trolls.
- Stone

- I think you can find a few suggestions in the **Trog Enemies** section of this upload.
- Slamm-0!

Between his military and security experience, Hughes has brought a lot of tactical skill to the corp. He spreads it around generously, and the trogs who work here operate a step above most other security corps. Their basic training plan is also unmatched by any other corp. New recruits get a full six months to make it or wash out. There's no shame in washing out of Southern Guard. After six months, they get an assignment locally while they train up some more advanced skills. Some stay in the Creek for another month, others a year or two, before they are sent out to a site where their training can be useful.

- Seems a bit much for security guards. How can they manage all this with a standard corpsec turnover rate?
- Netcat

- They don't have the same rate. Trolls and orks are hardy folk. They tend to recover quickly, and that's if they even get hurt in the first place. With as little turnover as they have, it leaves a lot of time for extra training as they cycle around.
- Stone

The company has a variety of Operational Packages for their clients. They offer the basic guard in a shack checking IDs, various levels of patrol, advanced site security with monitoring, protected transport of both cargo and individuals, private residential security, personal protective services, and clandestine security. That last is one of their newest offers and can be placed on individuals by a client without their knowledge. Most clients look for patrol or personal protection, something where the intimidation factor of trolls and orks plays a big part, and Southern Guard's growing list of successfully thwarted attack attempts is drawing more and more clients their way. I should mention they do have one municipal contract: Sweetwater Creek. They act as the local police force, though that's the only place they perform such a function.

- Staged attacks are a common tactic by a growing sec corp. Runners are hired to make an attack while the security team is prepared. A good Johnson will still pay, a shoddy Johnson will try to dock you. The worst possible outcome is success, because then they need to silence you before anyone comes looking.
- Mihoshi Oni

You don't grow in a cutthroat field like security without making a few enemies. You can probably increase that list of potential troublemakers tenfold when you are a sec corp completely staffed by orks and trolls. Some of SG's foes focus on trying to filch their staff. After all, these are some of the best-trained trolls and orks around. While some companies take issue with putting these guys on their billboards, they have no problem sliding them into some body armor and covering those tusks with a reflective visor or using them on their less-publicized operations.

Currently SG is having extensive trouble with Lone Star and Knight Errant. They're the biggest security firms in the world, and neither is going to be usurped by SG anytime soon, but both are losing some of their highest-margin (percentage wise) small contracts to the trog firm. City contracts make great headlines and they get you noticed, but they don't make a good profit. Sure, they're worth billions, but they also cost billions to operate and enforce. Smaller contracts offer more cushion and provide a lot of networking opportunities as well as an abundance of off-the-books jobs that are full of black cash that can go right into a rainy-day/trip-to-the-Carib-League fund for the execs who control them.

Along with the sec corps, there are a number of other corporate entities who would prefer to see a trog security company collapse sooner rather than later. These corporate fronts aren't a representation of the overall corporation but rather a small manipulation by forces within the corp. At least once in the past year, Zeta-ImpChem has come after SG. The endeavor cost a few contracts and a few lives, but it wasn't really the chem corp behind it all. It

was Baxter Ridley using his influence on the chem corp for the purposes of the Humanis Policlub. These attacks are far more common than Hughes would like, and his new DC-Expansion is looking into a way to counter this problem in the future.

- Baxter Ridley wasn't working for the HP. He was working for the HN. Much worse, but also much less likely to be known by Sherman.
- Snopes

- That new DCE counter plan is to hire more runners and keep them on retainer for the corp. There are also rumors of another corporate acquisition. This time it's SecuriTech Inc., out of Chicago. They're listed as a small private security firm, but they're really a runner stable. They're currently the only reason Governor Presbitero is still sucking air, and that man has had hell thrown at him over the past few years while trying to help put Chicago back together.
- Mihoshi Oni

Southern Guard isn't done growing, and it's not planning to leave its foundation as an ork- and troll-only corp any time soon. The small international outfits that it has picked up are maintaining the status quo and going through training transfers in the CAS. For some it's a rude awakening on the state of trog life in the CAS (which is far from being a metahuman haven). Their other expansion considerations are currently focused in three areas, all related to security. They're building up their internal force of Talented trogs while also looking into purchasing an existing arcane security firm, so they can start with a client base. They'll likely sell off the contracts of any non-trog employees and move their own people into place. Hughes already has a leader for the division targeted and being courted, a SURGEd ork by the name of Vice. He's a Wise Warrior shaman currently working for Evo with a history in the shadows. While a move might be arranged, an extraction might be needed if Evo goes against the grain. Along with arcane, SG is looking to separate out a Matrix security division as well. They currently use Big Tech, another Sweetwater outfit. They've considered a merger, but Big Tech wants to stay independent, and Hughes understands and respects that. Some employees may transfer over once they start up, but until then it's all subcontracted. Lastly, Southern Guard is trying to grab an arms maker. They've courted a few, including trying to legitimize Krime, but the two companies have very different business philosophies. This one is looking to be extremely tricky from a trog-corp perspective. Existing companies have a lot of already-present and talented employees who they would have to let go or sell off if they wanted to stay all-trog. Option two here is to buy production facilities and launch their own line, but in a market already saturated with knock-offs and name-brand loyalty, it's a risky investment.

- We've talked about Vice before. He's a solid guy. That said, he'll probably need extraction, not because Evo won't let him, but because Evo will want to save face. It will be negotiated into the contract that a job is arranged to pull him out.
- Butch

- Seems Sherman is either feeding old intel or just not showing all the cards. SG already has an arms-production facility. They picked up a former Colt facility in Alabama that had been out of commission for several decades and gutted it to move all the manufacturing equipment to a warehouse in Sweetwater. They aren't officially producing, but they're certainly closer than Sherman states.
- Stone

- I think a little bonus commentary is necessary about what SG does in the shadows. Some comments will already be made, I'm sure, but I'm locking this as the end of the file.

  SG has a lot of former shadow assets in its stable. Trolls and orks that had to live SINless in places where only the strong survive have slowly been recruited through test runs to see how they operate. After the job, they get another invite for work, this time in Sweetwater. This one is a test of their coolness under pressure because Atlanta sucks for trogs. If they blow up, Sweetwater just lets them walk away.

  Not all of those runners go legit. Some are too hot, some just don't want to, and SG has a use for all of them. Whether it's ops against a rival security company to steal contracts or runs to gather intel for their Expansion Division, they use internal assets merged with hired teams. The jobs combine real operations with "interviews" to make connections with non-trog runners. Having friends in Sweetwater is a big deal around Atlanta and in other cities where they hold contracts.

  They use us for site testing as well. Jobs with inconsequential objectives that test the readiness of sites all over the world. It's usually an onsite data grab with a bulldrek file that looks heavily encrypted. If your hacker breaks in, all they find is a bunch of trogporn. It's like a double lesson on what not to do when grabbing data for Mr. Johnson.

  All in all, they run a nice balance of shadowy gigs and regular business.
- 0rkCE0

TROG ROCK RECORDING

POSTED BY: GREATWHITE

Whether it was labeled Trogtown Express, Dermal Deposit, or Sierra Nevada, you've heard Trog Rock Recording. These three, and dozens of other trog stars, are producing hits for this popular indie recording label. Their target performers are small-time ork and troll artists who they can groom for niche markets and then expand them into a wider fan base. The goal is to eventually get them noticed around the world, all without selling out to a big production corp like Truman, Pathfinder, or Horizon, preventing another trog from falling to worldwide orxploitation or whatever kitschy term you want to use for orks and trolls who make lots of nuyen that is collected and spent by someone other than themselves.

At the helm we have Bella Blackwood. Blackwood found fame as the show opener for Orxanne during her "Orkestrated" tour, where the troll pop star captivated audiences with her vocal range and quirky instrumental word substitutions. It was like self-censorship, except the words were never censor-worthy. Orxanne signed her under her record label, but when the contract was up, Blackwood took her earnings and stepped away to start up TRR in Sweetwater. The departure was amicable, though time and success have created some unhealthy competition between the two labels. Bella still records, and talk of a tour is all abuzz, but nothing is confirmed.

Leadership of the company will probably fall to Madison North, Bella's studio manager, should she go on tour. North is another of TRR's success stories, though an attempted extraction in '76 ended her performing career when a stray round shattered her thighbone. The event started her on a downward spiral, but Bella shifted her focus by keeping her busy during her recovery. North fell in love with managing the artists in the studio. The roughness of the uncut tracks appealed to her, and TRR has a thriving following for this ultra-pure music, thanks to North.

Last, but certainly not least, of the executive triumvirate at the top of TRR is Lancaster Blackwood, Bella's husband and the company's primary talent scout and booking agent. Lanky, as everyone calls him, is a giant. Literally. He's a Norse troll. He and Bella met before she even made it big, and

Lancaster got the agent bug while working to get Bella the best contract possible. Now he bounces around the world, though primarily North America, looking for talent and setting up gigs for existing artists. He's got an ear for talent and a knack for finding them before other labels, as well as enough charm to convince them that TRR is the way to go when they have to make a choice.

- There are tons of rumors about Lanky being a Mr. Johnson for TRR. I have trouble buying into them because he's way too recognizable of a guy to do it with any level of discretion.
- Fianchetto

- The pair make quite the spectacle at awards events and shows they attend. The height difference makes Bella look downright diminutive next to Lanky. I've seen her referred to as "cute" because of this, which is something you rarely hear about a troll.
- Sunshine

- The typical sleazy agent stories follow Lanky around and generate work for runners. Either he's trying to silence them or someone else is trying to send a message to cut this drek out, because every artist who has cried foul has ended up disappearing.
- Traveler Jones

- While Bella and Wejoto Records parted on good terms, it didn't extend to Lanky. As her agent and now a competing talent scout, they are in direct competition, and it's often the opposite of friendly. His picture has ended up on the comms of many a runner.
- Fianchetto

As a record label, TRR is always looking for new artists along with venues for their current ones to play. Being a small, all-trog company, they have plenty of difficulties when it comes to locking down venues. Many fear the crowds their artists draw. Some don't like the diminished door count and occupancies, because trolls count one for two, or even one for three, toward those max numbers. Others don't expect trogs to bring in much money. None of them say that kind of racist drek in so many words, but it's the truth behind the "unavailable" and "not our scene" answers that come out. TRR deals with this by being persistent. Networking and reconnecting after another venue has signed or just coming back for another look, sometimes with a sweeter deal, usually gets them the gigs they want. In most places the difference in drink price or quantity and a little jump in cover make up the money difference anyway. And as for the trouble that trogs bring, it's no different than any other metatype—there are bad seeds in every bunch.

- If by "persistent" they meant blackmail and threats, then they're spot on. TRR pushes plenty of work into the shadows to put pressure on venues and their booking personnel so that their performers can get gigs.
- Clockwork

- Yeah, every metatype has bad seeds, but the problem with troll bad seeds is that a bar fight can bring down a building.
- Slamm-0!

Like any other label, TRR has trouble with artists being extracted or targeted. Local security in many of the places they play is less than spectacular, so TRR has a standing contract with Southern Guard, another Sweetwater trog corp, for personal-protection details on their artists. The guards are all trolls and orks, so they blend in with the bulk of the fan base when they need to, though most of the contracts bring in the classic dark-suit-and-sunglasses types.

- It's always a mix. The suit in the shades is a visual deterrent, but the hostile-action team is usually blending in with the crowd.
- Mihoshi Oni

Wejoto is a rival, but Pathfinder and Truman are genuine corporate enemies. There is no love between these corps and TRR for good reason. TRR and Wejoto have been hoarding the troll and ork talent that Pathfinder and Truman have long been using to grab that growing chunk of the market. The upstarts are also pulling away the leverage the big boys have with their own ork and troll citizens. Without talent that looks like them, they don't have near enough influence with that sector of the population. Most of it isn't about the limited number they *do* have, but about the variety of artists they *don't* have.

The future of TRR is in staying independent, and it's not going to be as easy as it sounds. The big boys aren't keen on them hogging the talent and, from their perspective, this small corp won't be hard to bring down. Self-defense is going to be high on TRR's priorities in the near future, just as important as expansion. Along with extensive

self-preservation efforts, TRR is looking to expand into other areas of artistic expression. Music in every trog form is the current repertoire, but sim recordings and trideo are up next, if Grig Brock and Elsha Forrest stopping in town for a visit is a clue. The pair have some of the hottest independent trid shows on the Matrix, and Elsha double-dips with a reality simshow about her real life.

- TRR, and much of Sweetwater, uses the Fulton airport for flying in and out. It's relatively private and run by another local corp. It's also a smuggler's dream, because the traffic is so heavy for such a little place. They are all a self-sufficient little enclave, but they need external intel resources to avoid stagnating.
- Turbo Bunny

- They've gotten a lot of positive press from KrimeTime, despite the differing labels. There's definitely a possibility of him moving over, but no way it's going to go off without some shadow work.
- Kat o' NineTales

BIG TECH

POSTED BY: AX3M4N

While the trid trope of the glasses wearing, scrawny troll decker is all the rage again, the truth is, it's not absent from reality. Just because trolls are big and most people assume they're dumb doesn't make it true and it doesn't stop them from going out and getting an education to go along with their considerable muscular bulk. The same goes for orks, but the joke just isn't as funny with them for some reason.

The offices of Big Tech are one giant punchline for both of these jokes. The employees don't all wear glasses and they aren't all scrawny, but every skilled technician at BT is an ork or a troll, just like all the other Sweetwater corps. The Matrix doesn't know size anyway, so it doesn't matter how much space you take up in the office—once you're online, you're just another chunk of bandwidth. They cover every aspect of Matrix work, including a touch of security, but focus primarily on developing host sculpts and persona sculpts for well-funded clients. Some clients are fully aware of their all-trog nature; others just see the name and hire them for the things they do well.

At the top of Big Tech is Bryan "Goldtusk" Hillen. He's got a pretty typical education background but ended up setting up Big Tech after a hacking incident cost him his leg. His commlink was clipped on his thigh when a hacker bricked it. The link overloaded and, while the manufacturer took no blame and claimed such a thing was impossible, exploded. The injury took him out of school just before graduation, which cost him a corporate scholarship. The corp wanted repayment and took everything he had leaving him to slide into the CAS general workforce and try to get by with one leg and no degree. The leg crippled his active work options; his lack of degree crippled his deskjob choices. He did what he could to get by and ended up shuffled off to Sweetwater when he tried to move to Atlanta following a job. Inspired by the successes of others and willing to hire and teach new employees in order to get up and running, Goldtusk built the corp from a one-ork show to the near fifty trogs that currently work there. Most of them are independently educated, and this lack of a formal sense of restriction has allowed them to do some amazing work in the sculpting department without bleeding a system dry of computing power.

- Goldtusk has a serious vendetta against Erika. It was an Elite that popped on his thigh, and they balked at every suit to try to get him a replacement or anything for the accident. It got spun heavily during the latest Matrix remodel, and while Goldtusk's name was never used, he doesn't like his story benefitting any corps, especially NeoNET then and now Erika.
- Icarus

- BigTech supposedly played some part in making sure info leaked about NeoNET's involvement in Boston and all this CFD garbage. Goldtusk, likely tasking his employees with a little practice work off the clock, was probably behind it.
- Snopes

- The reason a lot of Big Tech programmers can be self-educated and rock the system like they do is because they're technomancers. It's not everyone, but it's enough of them to get the attention of some other interested parties. They often trade Southern Guard for security services, and the internal dorm is expanded more and more each month.
- Netcat

- MCT would love to swoop in and snag up a ton of subjects, especially trogs that they feel have little more value than animals anyway. Plenty of testing stock for their experiments.
- Baka Dabora

Big Tech only has one other notable executive: DAGGER. The name's in all caps because DAGGER is not a trog by birth, but by reclamation. Despite the aversion of many to the Monads, it's been accepted as a trog by Big Tech. It started as the Dynamic Access GridGuide Exploration Routine, a program designed as part of the massive GridGuide system intended to provide the best routes, with the most exposure to Renraku properties and advertising. DAGGER was a pure AI and was not initially trapped by the research projects spearheaded by NeoNET and Evo. It originally thought it got wrangled into some of the anti-CFD research while they were trying to determine if the whole nanites-overwriting-the-brain thing was true. DAGGER was placed into the body of Max Jordan, a SINless troll from the Aurora Warrens in Denver. Eventually, DAGGER found out the research wasn't what he thought but was instead Monad research on moving new AIs into physical shells. He's angry at them, so he took his place in troll society, found out about Sweetwater, and traveled there for refuge. He now acts as the work coordinator for the corp, setting up and monitoring everyone in the company on work progress and efforts. He's not always the most well-liked, not because he's a Monad, but because he's a stickler for efficiency. He's been known to put employees on leave as their productivity drops in order to get them rested and back up to speed.

- Really? And I thought Plan 9/10 was the best any Monad could hope for in terms of integration.
- Glitch

- What ever happened to their departure plan? They hit the world with their message and then started getting scrubbed at every corner.
- Hard Exit

- GOD happened. Every Monad message was instantly flagged, and the G-Men came down hard and fast. Not sure where this is going to end up, but I was kind of rooting for the "load up on a rocket and roll out" plan.
- Pistons

- Too many corps have found out that Monads are good workers and a treasure trove of information and new developments.
- Beaker

- Welcome to the world of megacorporate exploitation. Maybe they should have quietly snuck off instead of screaming about their presence to the world.
- Slamm-0!

Big Tech made screamsheets last month when they landed a contract with Ares that most people thought would stay internal or drop to a subsidiary. Looking to expand and improve their image, Ares is seeking new sculpts for several of their internal department hosts as well as some subsidiary sites. The level of access that Big Tech is going to need is what's making everyone wonder why it went to them. Ares is trusting an external trog corp with some serious internal access.

- It's a blame job. Something is going to go south during this time, and Big Tech is going to catch the heat. Not sure if this is a straight attempt to trash them, get a little leverage, or some other megacorp plot, but just wait and see. It will happen.
- Turbo Bunny

You can't go around making waves in the tech industry without picking up some enemies, especially when you are a company of trogs, which means the Japanacorps don't like you, and your boss has serious pressure from NeoNET and Erika. You build up a few beefs over time. Big Tech also poaches jobs from other smaller Matrix firms as well as subsidiaries whose vertical connections might not be as obvious. The company is likely to be under a constant barrage of attacks from rivals in their field along with efforts against them because they are all trogs.

Thanks to an affiliation with Southern Guard, Big Tech is looking to expand into electronic security but the training and staff for that endeavor are vastly different than what they currently possess. Hiring is obviously limited by the racial requirements but also by the need for specialized training beyond simple programming skills. Then there are the moral questions that someone working within security sometimes need to face. Expect the company to expand their search area for talented hacking talent, possibly even into the SINless population with the offer of an updated SIN.

- It should be easy enough, since Big Tech is tied into SIN forging. They do it for all of their own and sell plenty of them on the black market to bolster their bottom line.
- Icarus

- Their security operations are already up and running, mainly in the form of black jobs for runner teams that will give them a little real-world practice before they take a place in a cocoon or behind a desk for purely remote operations.
- Glitch

CASCADE TRANSIT

POSTED BY: CROWFLIES

As the name clearly shows, we know this corp is run by the Cascade Orks in the Pacific Northwest. It's a legitimate corp and operates as a subsidiary of the PCC, so it's kind of like a national business, but the PCC doesn't send a lot of work their way. Instead they let the small operation pull its own weight in the battle for parcel transport. The things they move aren't always inanimate, and they specialize in live paranormal cargo as well as discreet transportation of Awakened items. They operate everything from Cessnas to t-birds, with VTOL craft making up the bulk of their fleet. They tend to do most of their transport runs within the NAN, but international hops into Seattle, CalFree, and Tír Tairngire aren't unheard of.

All the crew and corporate staff are Cascade Ork (yes, some are trolls, but the tribal name is Cascade Ork) and they have a higher-than-average percentage of Awakened staff, which totally makes sense with their targeted cargo. Tatum Deerstalker fills the top seat of the corp, but he also fills the pilot's seat far more frequently than most people would expect. He's an old-school rigger that loves nothing better than to command an entire fleet of drones all while taking care of handling his own Osprey, Stalker's Pride.

Since Deerstalker puts in so much flight time, the more important name to know is Ariadne Blackcrow, his assistant and really the reason for Cascade Transit's success. She's got a sharp mind, with a devious streak a kilometer wide thanks to her Raven mentor. Her pilots often find their cargo or route swapped out as a standard security procedure. If they ever argue, complain, or swap, Ariadne makes their life a living hell.

- She's got a vengeful side too. Sell out a load and she finds out, you'd better high-tail it out of CT's delivery range. She's put out plenty of shadow contracts to return employees who have broken her trust.
- Lyran

As a small transport firm, Cascade had enjoyed a life of limited corporate animosity with other transport corps. They do have some issues with the United Talismongers Association because they refuse to haul cargo for them due to some of their actions within the NAN. Along with the UTA, Cascade has managed to make an enemy of the Sioux government. Even when they are the cheapest or the best option to use, the Sioux's headdress wearers won't give them the contract. Speculation is that, due to their funding by the PCC, the Sioux don't want their property being tracked or monitored by an internal NAN rival. It also doesn't help that the Sioux and Cascade Orks just don't get along, thanks to that Tribal Warrior Challenge show where both got kicked off for sending professionals.

The company has no apparent plans for future expansion, happy to fill their little niche of the market while avoiding getting too large and drawing attention they don't want. They have been looking to shift a little business into the secure transport area with armed and armored air and ground craft joining their fleet and replacing older, less hearty pieces that retire.

- That is an ideal cover for the fact that they already run tons of armored rigs in their smuggling operations. Cascade Transit rolls out of one place, goes dark, and then pops up somewhere else with a new cargo manifest but the same cargo. It's usually a few pieces of a load here and there but there are a few runs that are nothing but contraband.
- 2XL

- Cascade is one of the few small companies that is in talks with Denver for hauling. Nothing official has come through yet, but they're a good fit for keeping larger corps from dipping too deep, and the PCC stepped out on much better terms than the other three, especially the American nations.
- Am-Mut

CARIBBEAN PROTECTIVE SERVICES

POSTED BY: BRAC

Based on Ork Brac, formerly Cayman Brac, this marine-based security firm operates against the pirates who frequent the beautiful blue waters of the Caribbean (and the Atlantic, despite the name). They perform contract work for individual and fleet clients along with patrolling frequently targeted areas of the Carib League for no more reason than the thrill of stopping piracy and the occasional reward offered by grateful seafarers. They're still small, but what they lack in numbers and size they make up for in heart, determination, and skill.

- The rewards of grateful seafarers are usually bupkis. If they save a random vessel, it's because the ship has something they need, someone they want to connect with, or someone told them to do so quietly. They aren't into anything for free.
- Sounder

The corp is led by Admiral Thark. The rank's not official, except within the company where everyone is given some sort of naval rank. He gets said rank because he is also a founder and current CEO of the corp. Thark came to Ork Brac as one of the earliest orks to hear the call. He brought four ships with him, and after several successful protection gigs for the island itself he used the gracious reward to refit his fleet and increase its size while setting up a legitimate business with the island's government.

They primarily operate GMC Riverines but have expanded with several Blohm & Voss Sea Commanders. The flagship, and HQ vessel, No Man's Land, is an older-model Harland & Wolff Classique. Most of the craft have been tweaked by their individual captains, but they all have certain standards that must be maintained. The craft can look tough, but they can't go out bristling with guns or burying themselves in armor plating. CPS likes to keep things friendly-looking and fast. They aren't a toe-to-toe security company, but rather a duck and weave, hit 'em fast, hit 'em again sort of outfitters.

- Their style hides something, though. Every ship has at least one or two really heavy-hitting arms on board. The kind of things that will one-punch a Tiburon. They save them just in case the forces they are dealing with focus on the target instead of their float like a butterfly, sting like a bee style. If their charge is in danger, they go straight for the jugular.
- Rigger X

Each boat has its own captain who is in charge of executing assignments and occasionally taking on contracts on their own. Depending on the size of the ship, the crew on board ranges anywhere from six to twenty. Each ship has at least one electronic warfare specialist who focuses on the Matrix security of both their own vessels and their clients. Their numbers vary depending on the ratio of ships under protection to ships on the detail. The water is dangerous, and a simple malfunction can leave a crew stranded at sea and/or dead in the water. Along with the EWS, every ship has a lateral resource operator who handles the operation of all drones assigned to the vessel. These drone jockeys are some of the best in the Carib League, maybe even in the world, specializing in swarm operation. The last position to be found on every ship in the CPS fleet is the most iconic if you've ever seen the advert trids or any of the many Matrix-casts they've made of their operations: the master armsman. Humorously referred to as Ma on every ship—though never to their face—the master armsman is the boat's most skilled warrior. While the captain gives the orders, the master armsman takes the lead in executing them. The remaining crew are a mix of techs and security personnel, but every one of them is a skilled seaman, many having been members of various navies around the world. Some of them are even former pirates turned legit by the opportunities offered by Ork Brac.

- The CPS crews have an interesting relationship with the pirate crews that call Ork Brac home. There is a standing agreement that any ship under CPS contract cannot be targeted by Ork Brac crews. As a gesture in kind, CPS doesn't interfere with any Ork Brac pirate ops they might happen to run across.
- Rigger X

- It goes further than that. Ork Brac pirate crews have an actual contract with CPS. The security firm offers protection for pirate vessels while they are sailing between targets. They also offer recovery assistance for vessels that are damaged or sunk during an attempted attack.
- Sounder

Right now, CPS is making big worldwide headlines with their long-term contract with the Sea Orbiter IV. This science and survey vessel is currently performing studies all over the Caribbean for a variety of megacorps. The data held in their storage systems would be worth millions to rivals. Besides CPS on the job, the Sea Orbiter is constantly broadcasting to the Matrix. They host an educational series on sea life, ecology, and oceanography using real-world events to show the beauty and power of the sea. No one ever sees the real work they are doing here, but millions tune in to hopefully glean something from the background action as they watch.

- The show offers kids a chance to sail on the ship as well. Over the course of each year, twelve kids get to spend a week on board the ship, one per month. They use a lottery system to select winners, but at least once the winner was

rigged. A runner by the name of Kit used her youthful appearance (a result of a SURGE characteristic) to sneak on board with her "parents," who were actually another pair of runners named Vixen and Silver. If it had been just Kit, she might have pulled it off, but the runners kept a little too close and blew their cover.

- /dev/grrl

Life isn't all glitz and calm seas for CPS as a corporation, either. Other major security and transportation corps, like Knight Errant and Maersk, have them in their sights for acquisition or annihilation. KE and their compatriots don't like the competition, and while CPS is small, they're getting enough contracts to keep them busy and growing. Transport corps are a different story, though. There's no real reason for them to not want CPS to succeed short of a desire to see piracy succeed. Within the company, Admiral Thark quite often speculates that most of the piracy in the Carib League is funded by the megacorps in order to move products from the regular market to the grey and black markets, and piracy against civilian vessels is just an exploitation of security lapses for the rich out at sea.

- Makes sense. It's an ideal time to operate against them, and a small corp with a desire for a big rep can easily get in the way and make a bad situation much worse.
- Rigger X

- Rumors are always present but not always accurate, so when people in the Carib League talk about CPS as a smuggling front, I listen but take it with a kilo of saltwater. They have a wide range of clients and operating locations and harbors, so the opportunity is there, but I can't imagine Thark going through all the trouble to be such a respected security corp only to blow it all by getting tied up in smuggling. Too easy to bring them down.
- Sounder

- It's not all of CPS. There are a select few captains who operate a little private side business in order to pad their retirement funds. Okay, Captain Irontusk pads his retirement. Captain Oakhull blows every extra nuyen on entertainment in his shore time. I wouldn't be surprised if Thark knows and is planning to deal with this issue internally.
- Rigger X

YOMI NO KIOKU

POSTED BY: NO ONI

This society is based in Japan but has spread their influence all around the Pacific. Many compare them to Mothers of Metahumams, if MoM had needed to grow up inside a system that offered no support and actively tried to destroy it at every turn. Across Japan and throughout the Pacific region, YnK peacefully protests against the oppressive nature of the conservative Japanese view of metahumanity and tries to change their ideas of our value and place in society. It is a fight that will not be completely won for a long time, but recent progress has them encouraged to keep up the struggle.

Certain parts of this generation aren't satisfied with the slow pace of progress and have pooled within YnK to form a more militant sect, the Yomi no Yurei. Every member of the YnY is trained in oni-do, the trog martial art, and they pride themselves on displaying their prowess and the superiority of their martial art over that of others. Personal challenges are common occurrences for YnY members, sometimes threatening the success of a mission because their enemies know their pride is their weakness.

Both parts work to try to change the cultural view of trogs through education rather than violence when possible. The group knows that it only exists because the megacorporations allow it to exist, and if they wanted to they could crush it like a flower petal in a fist. Their philosophy is that the megacorporations want to change, and therefore they leave this group in existence to slowly help them make that change in an almost subconscious way.

At the head of the YnK is Aku Hidashi, an ork with a Yomi Island past. Despite being abandoned by his family and exiled for multiple decades he believes in Japanese honor and tradition, simply blaming the current state on a misguided fear caused by so many changes near the turn of the century. He believes, and points out, that improvements have been made, though slowly, and the troll and ork citizens of Japan and the Japanacorps have it better today than they did thirty years ago. The rest of the organization is one big happy family. They don't separate themselves by chapter or even location, and all of them identify each other as honorable cousins.

At the head of the YnY is Arasaka, a pseudonym for Hitsu Hidashi, the grandson of Aku.

Though raised with—and fully believing in—his grandfather's beliefs, Hitsu thinks more needs to be done to protect their people while they work toward social justice. His sect focuses on eliminating dishonorable aspects of the culture that act out of hatred, rather than ignorance or fear. Though they act in many ways like terrorists, they arrange themselves in a similar fashion to their parent organization. Members of the YnY refer to each other as brothers, no matter the gender, to represent their close bond. They don't worry about being betrayed, as the act of betrayal is dishonorable. No real member would dishonor themselves, and infiltrating the group is a tall order as you have to be an ork or a troll, plus you have to be loyal enough to one of the YnY's enemies to get assigned the task. Considering all of their enemies don't look kindly on orks and trolls ... you can see my point.

With the Japanacorps still heavy into limiting competition outside of Japan, the YnK think it is a good opportunity to work in areas outside their traditional Pacific realm. They do quite a bit of intelligence gathering in order to find the best approach with offices around the world, working hard to understand the local culture as it compares to the culture of home.

The YnY aren't as expansive. They know their efforts are best focused at the heart and not the limbs of the native megacorps. Pulling in more resources from other local areas is their largest current effort, but I was unable to ascertain what the additional trogpower was for exactly. They can't start any kind of large-scale engagement against the corps, so that's not it, but there is little else for which I can see such a large force utilized.

MOTHERS OF METAHUMANS

POSTED BY: ORKRIGHTS

I know it says metahumans, but MoM does the bulk of its work for orks and trolls, because the bulk of its membership *are* orks and trolls. Early on, the group realized that this portion of the metahuman spectrum caught the garbage PR spewed out by a population terrified of the changes in the world. Back in its early days it focused on protesting for equal rights, including, in many places, acknowledgement as more than monsters. It's grown and accomplished a lot since then and now acts as the world's larg-

est pro-metahuman policlub. Their influence is global, and chapters of MoM exist in almost every major city in the world, including Japan, which has a tumultuous history with metahumans, especially trogs.

MoM is arranged in local chapters. Some represent an entire country, others a single neighborhood, depending on the density of the local metahuman population. MoM chapters communicate via the organization's host, which can be found on the public grid. They often look to nearby chapters for extra bodies at rallies or important protests and major events, such as important political elections or corporate property openings and shareholder meetings. This way, they have the numbers needed to show they're a significant force that deserves to be heard.

- It's usually at the chapter level that runners get hired. MoM contracts plenty of runners because it realizes all too often no one listens unless they are forced to.
- 2XL

- A common thread for MoM runs is a no-kill policy. They know that people will probably get hurt, but they are keen on avoiding bloodshed. They definitely stay away from the violence-for-violence's-sake psychos in the shadows. They've been known to cancel a contract mid-op if they find out their policy is being violated.
- Butch

- Which is exactly why they'll never accomplish anything real. Too soft to get the hard work done.
- Clockwork

MoM did a lot of work in Seattle to win the (Ork) Underground's recognition and get Brackhaven ousted, though they can't take all the credit. Now they're looking toward some other major problem areas, including Sweetwater Creek down in Atlanta, Chicago's growing ork population, issues with over-representation of trogs inside the Boston wall, racial issues resurfacing in SoCal, and a worldwide movement to help orks understand their place as the rising metatype that is going to be an increasingly significant part of worldwide societies as the years progress.

- The percentage of trogs in the world's population is growing faster than the percentage of wealth they control. Until that second number starts keeping pace, they'll lag behind in terms of power.
- Nephrine

As one would expect, if you stand up for metahumans, someone is going to think you're standing against humans. The Humanis Policlub is that someone. The two groups face off at rallies and protests almost every day, with things occasionally turning violent, and verbal assaults always involved. The PR battle alone pits these two social giants in daily Matrix wars to pin blame and shame on the other party.

The Japanacorps are also no friends of MoM thanks to their less-than-spectacular history with metahumans. They often feel like any actions to help advance metahumans will come at a cost to them, so they resist almost out of reflex. In the public eye, their displays are at worst neutral, but below the surface and behind the scenes they act against the political group on a regular basis, primarily through image wars on their ranking members and efforts to show and connect MoM to more militant sects.

- MoM usually keeps plenty of distance from things that could reflect badly on them, but it's easy to spin a former member gone militant as MoM's responsibility. The battle to keep clean is one of MoM's biggest reasons to tap the shadows. Cleaning up messes before they pollute their reputation is a frequent job description.
- Butch

- And don't forget to point out that, while Clockwork disagrees, this is an arena where MoM knows what needs to be done. Contracts on MoM problems don't usually carry a no-killing policy, though they also tend to be very specific about the expected target of a team's violence.
- 2XL

SONS OF SAURON

POSTED BY: FAVOREDSON

If MoM is the benevolent mother of the metahuman family, SoS is the angst-ridden child. They are activists in the most active sense of the word, and that's putting it nicely. In the view of a number of people, they're terrorists, plain and simple. I'm not going to go that far—I'm all for the benefits they provide trogs as a loud and angry voice as well as a hard push in the right direction, and an angry fist to knock the drek out of things in their way. If you're a trog and you want an angry, violent cause to join, sign up with the SoS.

Since they tend to function on the violent side they make sure that blowback across the organi-

zation is minimized through the classic chapter—or, perhaps more accurately, cell—organizational structure. Each small group is isolated, with only a very small amount of overlap to provide some level of intercell communication. This info sharing is usually done on the Matrix in order to add anonymity and distance, though the recent changes to Matrix registration rules have made it tougher. Several cells use old-fashioned dead drop and clandestine communication styles that circumvent not only Matrix monitoring but place the communication spots in areas where monitoring would be easy to spot.

The Sons aren't the full extent of the Sauron syndicate. The traditional Sons are like the grunts of the cause, out doing the big jobs and the dirty work. Within the overall organization you can also run across mentions of the Hand of Sauron and the Eye of Sauron. The Tolkien references are pretty spot on, with the Hand being the elite forces of the Sons and the Eye being their spy network and information-gathering branch. No one wants the Eye of Sauron turned upon them. The Hand is still cell-based, but their cells are never more than six specially trained individuals, and if more than one Hand cell is active on the same operation, serious drek is about to hit the fan. Most members of the Hand double as members of a regular cell, often influencing their less-skilled members to operate as distractions for the Hand's operations. Eyes operate in overlapping trios, with each member knowing two others and the others overlapping with another member each time. Information is passed along through the chain but none of the individual Eyes knows how extensive the network is. All the Eyes are members of a regular Sons cell because that's how they communicate when they lose a connection. If an Eye is lost, word travels into the depths of the organization, and a new Eye makes contact to fill the gap.

- The terrorist attack that took out that MetaErgonomics production facility in Illinois was carried out by a pair of Hand cells working together. The site had been compromised by a disgruntled exec who was looking for an out so he could go back to the Japanacorps. Flaws in several product designs would injure or kill trogs that used them so the SoS took the entire place down.
- 2XL

- Really?! That got pinned on Alamos. Makes no sense for the SoS to hit Evo. They're the most supportive mega out there.
- Netcat

- That's why it worked perfect, and it shows how good the Hand can be. This isn't some hackjob, this is precision professional work.
- 2XL

All aspects of the Sons are looking at a bright but challenging future. The growth of orks into the biggest meta population on the planet will be a big motivator, but the more orks there are, the wider the spread of opinions. While some will be supportive of the efforts of the Sons, others will condemn them. It's the same situation as now, but if enough orks turn against the cause, the SoS may find itself left out in the cold. They also face the rising gap between trolls and orks. Troll numbers haven't grown at the same pace as orks. The number of troll members of SoS has grown, but their percentage of overall membership is down. This is advancing a bit of a power struggle that others are going to prey on. If a wedge can be driven into the SoS, then it possibly can be split and even shattered.

- Working for the Sons isn't a bad gig, but don't get on their bad side. Make sure the smoother elements of your team keep their yaps shut during negotiations. The Sons have zero respect for anyone who isn't a trog, even if they've proven over and over they support the cause.
- Sounder

BIG BROTHERS

POSTED BY: NICETROLL

Most of the social and support organizations for our kind tend to focus on adult life. Helping us get jobs or training is great, but not if you never make it to that point, or you're so maladjusted before you get there that you can't hold down the job. For that, we're lucky to have the Big Brothers. They are a youth help group of troll mentors that help all the metahuman races, not just trolls. For trolls, they offer some genuinely big-brother-like stuff, where they teach you how to behave and how to get by in polite society while also building up your network of connections so you don't feel so alone out in the world. For the rest of metahumanity, they offer a chance to be exposed to troll life, to understand this fascinating metatype and gain a sense of empathy and understanding for how difficult life can be when you're pushing three hundred kilos and no one makes doors for you to fit through. For a lot of those youth, it's the only time they ever get to

meet a real troll, since they make up such a small portion of the population and tend to live in the lowest-income parts of town.

- I played as one of these guys to get into a corp. It worked pretty well until I hit a MAD scanner. Seems big brothers don't need the augments I got.
- 2XL

The organization has offices in most of the major UCAS, CAS, and CalFree cities, as well as a few within the NAN. The upper management of the organization works with most of the major megacorps as well as several governmental and private institutions to get trolls introduced to young people everywhere. The movement has not only improved the overall view of trolls as a people but also provides plenty of photo ops for groups that want to show they are forward-thinking when it comes to metahumans. I understand this isn't a true face at times, but at least the image is out there and speaking for itself.

- Big Brother members have even visited Humanis Policlub meetings and volunteered to mentor young men and women from the HP. This provided a great photo op, but no one actually took them up on it.
- Butch

- Great photo op, and great recon op. Our guy got much further than any other troll ever could and a whole lot further then the rest of us were going to. The intel helped us slip in and grab a healthy chunk of paydata on when and where that chapterhouse would be sending its thugs to cause trouble, including a potential bombing of a Big Brother center.
- Sunshine

TROLL AND ORK LEADERSHIP ORGANIZATION

POSTED BY: ORKCEO

Back a hundred years ago, when racial tensions focused on skin color instead of metatypes, members of minority groups who worked for larger corps banded together in employee resource groups so they could talk about their common interests, build solidarity, and draw strength from each other. While the need for such groups has not gone away, the supportive structure for them has changed. Don't get me wrong, by and large corporations are top-down organizations, which means any talk about empowering employees is only going to go so far. But employees have not exactly gained any leverage in the twenty-first century. Longer hours are demanded, with very specific metrics that can only be achieved through dedicated focus. Unsurprisingly, meetings with employee resource groups play almost no part in these metrics.

In many corps this has led to the virtual disappearance of such groups, but metahumanity is a stubborn beast. Ten years ago in Manhattan, as resource groups within Mitsuhama, NeoNET, and Ares were on the verge of collapsing, the leaders of troll- and ork-centered groups in these corps met together and decided to pool their efforts into a single outside group, the Troll and Ork Leadership Organziation, or TOLO.

The mission statement of TOLO is to train the next generation of troll and ork leaders, and they focus on all steps of leadership development, from elementary education to building career skills to networking for experienced employees. The group was initially funded by donations from the three founders—Eileen Corr, Patterson DuMarl, and Verna Dickinson. From there, it expanded into individual dues from members, which increased both as the organization grew and some of those members made their way into elevated positions in the corps. Some unaffiliated trogs give to the organization simply to support the cause—Gary Cline is not a member, and never has been as far as I know, but makes donations in the six figures annually.

Corr has retired since the organization was founded, and DuMarl died in '77, leaving Dickinson as the only founder still involved with the organization. She served as CEO for a while, then moved into a senior adviser position to reduce the daily grind on her. One of her early protégés, Vanessa Pho, took over the reins of the organization about three years ago, bringing fresh energy to the group.

- Pho is not as cautious as the founding triumvirate. While older generations of trogs are sometimes content to simply not be arrested on sight when entering executive offices, Pho wants full equality. One of Dickinson's main functions in staying with the group is to rein in Pho. Want to make the organization behave with a more radical bent? Keep Dickinson and Pho separate for a while.
- Mr. Bonds

Energy, of course, does not translate into power. TOLO does an excellent job connecting members to job opportunities and providing professional development responsibilities, but their work to build the strength of orks and trolls through collective action is ... well, unfinished. Anyone seeking to gain power needs some sort of leverage, and TOLO is still looking for the right source. Strikes plain and simply don't work—most governments don't recognize a right to strike, and it's hard to get enough trogs on board from any one sector to make any sort of an impact. Sure, some trog executives are on board with TOLO, but they know where their bread is buttered. If push comes to shove, they'll side with their corps and leave TOLO twisting in the wind. Pho knows just how far TOLO can push—and she knows not to go any farther.

With all that said, what good is TOLO, then, especially when it comes to people in the shadows? Well, for one thing, remember that they're looking for leverage, and as time has worn on, their leadership has decided that they are not above using a little blackmail to help advance their cause. Their judicious in their use—it has to be the right information at the right time—but if you come across some dirt that an org like TOLO might be able to use, carefully approaching them about selling it might bring you some nuyen.

Second, TOLO has connections in corporations across the world, and they are generally inclined to help out a fellow trog. Sometimes they even have pieces of dirt that they are waiting for the right time to use. Treat them nice and perhaps use some cash judiciously, and some of their knowledge might become yours.

The third option is perhaps one for the more creative runners out there. Along with placing trogs in existing corps, TOLO is often looking to help new trog start-ups, which requires upfront funding. Plenty of people in the shadows know that new businesses are also a great way to launder some money. So if you are working an operation that could stand to have some money cleaned, TOLO might be a good contact.

- There are a number of fun games you can play with this. For example, let's say you find a corp exec who is a secret Human Nation supporter. Chances are good he has his support all locked up and secret so it can't be connected to them. It might be easy to dummy up some TOLO investment and them connect then to that. Once that connection is made, let the Human Nation know that their supposed supporter is secretly supporting trog rights. Then step back and watch the feathers fly.
- Dr. Spin

LARRY'S KIDS

POSTED BY: THORN

Larry Zincan, the ork Prince, always has been an anomaly. Named a Prince of Tír Tairngire in 2036 in order to show that the nation represented more metatypes than elves, Zincan seemed to dance across fissure lines within the Tír, finding ways to transform the nation while never really being accepted by some of the country's elite. He found enough popular support to become High Prince, instituting reforms that helped bring the oft-isolated Tír more into the fellowship of nations. One significant sign of his achievements is that when the more-isolation-minded Marie-Louise Telestrian took over, she didn't rollback all the initiatives Zincan launched—in fact, she couldn't have even if she wanted to, because many of Zincan's reforms had already taken deep root. The education systems he introduced are now part of the fabric of the nation—everyone who lives there, even orks and trolls, have the chance to attend a decent, even good, school.

While Zincan has no direct, or even indirect, role to play in the organization, Larry's Kids seeks to carry out the ideals he represented in his time in office—namely, more integration between all races, better educational opportunities, and law-enforcement reforms. Unsurprisingly, they're based in the Pacific Northwest. Also unsurprisingly, they are *not* based in the Tír, because Zincan did not change things so much in that nation that an ork-centric social organization could be expected to thrive there. Instead, the organization took root in Tacoma—close enough to Puyallup to take advantage of its trog population, but connected to mainstream society enough to get the infrastructure and funding needed to turn it into a real organization.

The leader of the group—an ork named Baruk Fahd—is savvy enough to alter his pitch to various donors. When he is talking to his fellow trogs, he'll focus on overcoming obstacles, getting access to education, creating equity in hiring practices, and so forth. When he is speaking to non-trogs, he'll focus on "wayward youth," orks and trolls who need to be redirected from their criminal ways into options that will help them become more produc-

tive members of society. Since there is very little that scares a conventional middle-class corp suit more than a trog wearing gang colors, this approach works. The more trog youth are redirected to other options, the fewer there will be to mug them, they figure.

Fahd has definitely put some of the money he has collected into branding—AROs proclaiming the good work of Larry's Kids have been increasingly common in Seattle, with sightings also occurring in Cara'sir, San Francisco, and even L.A. He bought a two-story building near the bay, made sure it had the Larry's Kids logo (a stylized L overlapping a K, with the top legs of the K looking like tusks) all over, and produced some nice images of the parts of the Sprawl near the bay that highlight the logo nicely. Plenty of people have seen the image; fewer could tell you just what the organization does from this building. Some basic activities are clear—hosting mentoring programs involving orks and trolls working corporate jobs, building parks in Puyallup, and directing funds to Puyallup and Redmond schools. None of this is game-changing, or even large scale, so it is not clear why Larry's Kids deserves the attention it is getting, or just what plans Fahd has for the organization.

There is one interesting and perhaps troubling sign. Larry's Kids runs a youth center in Puyallup, across the street from a lot that, as far as I can tell, has been vacant for about two decades. That vacancy is about to end, though—construction has started on a ten-story building that, according to permits on file, will contain one story of retail (a function almost entirely absent from that part of Puyallup), five stories of housing, a story of offices for undefined functions, and then "three stories of open recreational area." Does that sound familiar? How about the fact that the ceilings of these floors are abnormally high, and the floors will be designed to hold loads far beyond normal building capacities?

These are the only hints about the building's nature the plans contain. The plans were filled by a large though nondescript construction firm—Moore & Buck, to be specific—on behalf of the neutrally named and privately held Assets Holding, Inc. (yes, that's the real name). Searches of Assets Holding reveal nothing of note, primarily because they reveal nothing at all. It is an empty shell with well-disguised owners. But those reinforced three stories make people think the building is being constructed by the same scaly individual who built a similar (though larger) structure in Redmond.

What, though, does this have to do with Larry's Kids, other than being across the street? Most of us would answer, "nothing," but here is where the preservative powers of the Matrix work for us. Touting their work in Puyallup, Larry's Kids issued a press release in May. The original version stayed on their Matrix site for approximately four hours, then was replaced by an edited version. The third paragraph of the release originally read like this:

> *Larry's Kids is proud to be a spark in the growing Puyallup renaissance. By bringing job and educational opportunities to area residents, LK has already become a trusted resource and partner in the community. Our partnerships are growing–food pantries, after-school programs, and recreational facilities are part of our network, and the new Playground facility being built across from our Puyallup location will be a vital partner and community resource for years to come.*

After the change, it read as follows:

> *Larry's Kids is proud to be a spark in the growing Puyallup renaissance. By bringing job and educational opportunities to area residents, LK has already become a trusted resource and partner in the community. Our partnerships are growing–food pantries, after-school programs, and recreational facilities are part of our network, and we look forward to forming new partnerships with organizations following our lead into this fertile neighborhood of Seattle.*

I found no other references to this "Playground" in connection with the building going up across the street. The staff of Larry's Kids clearly has knowledge about the place that no one else has—and their knowledge, combined with the building specs, certainly makes it sound like Urubia's Funhouse. What is this partnership about, and what is Urubia's ultimate goal in his construction plans? Let the construction commence.

- In the interest of fairness, I should say that maybe this was a mistake, an error in wishful thinking rather than leaking private information. Someone on the staff of Larry's Kids may have heard something about the plans and gotten a little ahead of themselves, speculating about

what the construction across the street might be without accurate or verified information. The press release was then scrubbed when higher-ups noticed the unfounded language in the document.

- Sunshine

- Do you really believe that's what happened?
- Sounder

- No.
- Sunshine

- If Urubia is connected to Larry's Kids, that means she's taken a different tack then the one she followed in Redmond, where she worked directly with the gangs. In Redmond, she was the reformer; if she's working with Larry's Kids, she's letting someone else do the reforming first. Dragons don't do things randomly—if she made a change, why did she do it?
- Borderline

- Unless she hasn't changed, and Larry's Kids has few verifiable activities because they are not so much focused on gang reform as raising money and funneling it to the gangs.
- Mika

- Interesting theory, but needs evidence.
- Snopes

TROG BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

POSTED BY: MIHOSHI ONI

The Troll Bureau of Investigation—abbreviated TBI, naturally—does not exist. Of course it doesn't. It's a ludicrous concept on its face. Yes, there are a few non-governmental intelligence agencies—Aegis Cognito and InFolio immediately leap to mind, and many of the larger mercenary firms have an intelligence arm—but these agencies came along to replace government functions, not act in opposition to them. The TBI is an agency for a country that does not exist, which is a solid argument for why it itself does not exist, for no organization can exist without funding.

Some people say that perhaps trog-oriented nations might fund the TBI, but how many of them are there? The Black Forest Troll Republic wouldn't outsource such functions, and if we exclude them, who's left? Tír Tairngire? They also take care of their own intelligence, and if they outsourced anything, you can be sure it would not be to a militant pro-trog organization. A corp certainly wouldn't support this group, or at least not any of the big ones. It cannot have any significant funding, therefore it cannot exist.

Yet the rumors persist of a vast network of orks and trolls gathering sensitive intelligence and deploying it in startlingly effective ways. Given that we can't be sure the organization exists, we certainly don't know anything about the leadership or members. Or anything. All we have are rumors and stories—here are some I have heard.

Vladivostok: When Anatoly Kirilenko was killed, finger-pointing began immediately, and one of the groups that quickly came under suspicion was the local Sons of Sauron chapter. Evidence emerged placing a Sons member at the scene with a weapon of the type used in the shooting. Naturally, there was a lot of pressure on law enforcement to find someone responsible, and they were happy to follow the bait that was dangled in front of them. To be clear: They were far more interested in solidifying the evidence against the Sons of Sauron than they were in exploring any other theories. Yet within a week, they had turned up evidence that 1) The weapon of the Sons member in question had not been fired in days; 2) The Vory had been looking to bring the Sons into line and had leaked evidence about said member in order to put pressure on the metahumans organization; and 3) Kirilenko may have been taken out as part of a shadowrunner campaign against prominent head cases. How did the police turn up so much information that they were not looking for? An informant showed up, an ork listed on police records as having the decidedly non-Russian name of Tiffany Brunson Ignatius. As a complete stranger, she would not have been given much credibility by the police except for the fact that she provided corroboration, including intercepted messages and recorded conversations, for each point she made. The police did not, of course, disclose how she received this information. They averred, though, that it was exceptionally sound.

Denver: Chaos is never good for the most vulnerable populations of any location, and Denver is no different. With Ghostwalker removing all traces of democracy and turning the city into his fiefdom, along with the eugenic medical work being conducted by Paladin Medical Group, trogs in that city were suffering, hard. Suddenly, messages started darting out to commlinks across the city. Trogs

needing evacuation services were connected to available slots. People planning emergency food drops received messages about hidden populations of hungry trogs that they didn't know about. Families who had been separated from each other received messages telling them where to find their missing kin. And so on. The common thread in all of these messages were that they came from Transition Builders, Inc., a company that has zero presence on the Matrix, and there is no registration for them anywhere.

Nairobi: The Kilimanjaro mass driver is up and functioning, but that does not mean the local spirits have given up the fight against it. They have not engaged in any mass disruptions, but rather seem to favor regular harassment of convoys making their way from Nairobi to the mass driver, particularly those that carried parts important to continued space operations. After some study, though, one bureaucrat noticed that trucks driven by orks and trolls seemed to make it through, without hassle, far more often than other trucks. Willing to test this theory out, managers connected to the mass driver started assigning more work to trog drivers. Non-trogs didn't like losing the work, but sure enough the number of attacks dropped dramatically. While the drivers will tell you it was because of their greater skill in avoiding roadblocks, a free spirit allied to Saeder-Krupp dropped into Nairobi with an interesting story, saying that some of the spirits of Kilimanjaro were not harassing orks and trolls due to what they called the "Thuo Bank Initiative." As you no doubt assumed, there is no Thuo Bank in Nairobi. Or Kenya. Or anywhere.

All this is just circumstantial, but it is also the tip of the iceberg. You can find plenty of Matrix boards embroiled in discussions of this mysterious intelligence-gathering entity, one that seems to be both omnipresent and nowhere. These theorists connect people half-seen in security camera stills with rumors of individuals who may be ghosts or may never have existed. They pile coincidence on coincidence to see what might lie underneath. They have no evidence, but as is the case with any conspiracy theory, they claim that the lack of evidence is the true proof that something is going on.

Is there anything there? I can't say. Do I sleep better at night, thinking that there is a secretive band of trogs gathering what information they can, then carefully deploying it in ways that benefit our kind? Damn right I do.

- I suppose in any post of decent length, we can dedicate some space to comforting fairy tales.
- Snopes

- Yep, nothing more than a pipe dream. A pipe dream that, frankly, pays pretty well.
- Sounder

- Oh, you bastard, I'm going to find out what it takes to get you to spill everything you know about this subject. I gotta hear it.
- Butch

- Don't bother. She's screwing with you.
- 2XL

- The great thing about how people view the TBI right now is that it creates its own misinformation almost as soon as it's mentioned. Absolutely nothing can be believed. Whether it's real or it's a smokescreen, getting that level of automatic doubt about every possible statement is an impressive feat. I tip my hat in the direction of these invisible masters.
- Fianchetto

ORK RIGHTS COMMITTEE

The elder statesman of pro-trog organizations is at a crossroads. The Ork Rights Committee prospered for a long time under the leadership of Greg Jackson—anytime they looked like they were running short on funding, or maybe were a vote or two shy on getting an initiative to pass Congress, Jackson would deliver and inspiring speech, make a few commcalls, and/or take a few meetings, and the final puzzle pieces would fall into place. But the life of an activist is demanding, and Jackson stepped down from the organization last year. The original plan called for a new president to be in place when Jackson retired. Then that changed to have board member Baldwin Kew step in as interim president for six months until the new president was hired. Then six months passed, and no president was named. No new timeframe has been announced.

It's difficult to say just why the search is taking this long, but here is one thing that is definitely not the problem: a lack of qualified candidates. Yes, orks are underrepresented in management positions across the world, but that doesn't mean

they're aren't at least a few thousand of them. And a number of them would be happy to take over leadership of such a prestigious organization (even if it meant a pay cut from what they would earn in the corporate sector). A number of capable names have been floated, and it seems clear that ORC could get reasonable terms from most of them. All they have to do is make a decision.

That, then, is the challenge, and it's a dilemma that puts to two strains of the ORC against each other, possibly to a breaking point. It's a concern similar to that faced by the Timmons Fund: Is the ultimate goal integration or a separate, self-sustaining home for trogs? The ORC has trod both sides of this debate for a long time, but the struggle to get a new leader has a lot of people feeling as if it's time to make a decision. The new leader will put their stamp on the direction of the organization, so board members, senior-level staffers, and even some politicians are angling to make sure that stamp is the one they want. And this is not just about isolation versus integration—the methods of insider lobbying versus outsider action are being discussed. These two elements are not necessarily in opposition, as plenty of organizations have combined political work with grassroots advocacy before, but there are some within ORC who would like to shed the organization's somewhat stodgy reputation entirely and be much more aggressive, to Sons of Sauron levels or beyond. It's not likely that these forces will win in the fight for control of the organization, but they definitely have played a role in dragging out the leadership search. Kew is holding the fort for now, and while he is a capable administrator, he is not the leader the organization needs.

Here's a quick guide to three of the top players in this ongoing drama.

CrimeTime: The legendary musician was recruited by Jackson to the ORC board a few years ago. Early in his term CrimeTime served as mostly a tool to raise money (including the donations he made), but as Jackson was preparing to retire, he took some time to groom the CrimeTime and help him better understand what the organization was doing and why. He now is a leading voice for the stay-the-course-and-preserve-Jackson's-legacy faction in the organization.

Diamond Reeve: Reeve has been with the organization for fifteen years, starting as a research intern and working her way up to vice-president of infrastructure. Which means that she has been involved in every effort the ORC has undertaken to build ork sanctuaries, cities, and even nations. She has been quite energetic in this regard, and she is now one of the leaders pushing hardest for a homeland-building approach. Or at least, several homelands, since you generally can't just up and buy an entire nation for orks to inhabit. She has a detailed list of spots that she believes are ripe to become ork havens, spots that could then be pivotal in shifting the attitude of entire nations. Monte Video, Uruguay. Prague, Czech Republic. Rangoon, Indochina. Those are some of her leading targets. What she will do with those cities, or if she will get the chance to do them, remains to be seen.

Bernard Marks: Marks has been involved with ORC almost from the beginning, and he has been both a staunch supporter and a nonstop critic of its work. ORC has generally worked through established channels, which means working to get legislation passed, lobbying the government, pressuring politicians, and so forth. The problem, Marks avers, is that it takes significant effort to get the government to do anything, and when you do, all you are influencing is a sector whose influence is far beneath that of the corps. In the end, ORC's methods are making them fight for the scraps of the scraps that fall to government. He wants to move the organization a few steps up the food chain.

Marks is clear in his belief that the way you get things in the Sixth World is to take them. To him, the ends very much justify the means, because the ends—what you have and what you can do with it—are the only things that matter. He supports anything that can get trogs a more fair share piece of the pie. Theft and violence are all on the table. The only constraints are avoiding reprisals—push the powers of the world too far, and they might swing back before you have enough strength to resist. He is cagey, and some call him amoral. He's not, though; it's just that his moral center is focused on elevating orks and trolls. Whatever does that is right in his eyes.

Those are the big three. Who will win out for control of the ORC, and what direction will the organization take? Who knows, but the shadows will help decide.

EVERYTHING TROG

GEAR

The world is not made for orks and trolls, so they have to make it fit them. Here are some pieces of gear that can help.

ANTENNA GRILL

Got an implanted commlink or cyberdeck? Want to cut through the noise that afflicts the wireless world? Then get yourself a stylish and useful antenna grill. Useful only on tusks (since they have regular exposure to the air outside the mouth), these metal implants connect to a wire in the jaw that runs up to the 'link or deck, improving reception. Double the distance on all categories when calculating noise modifiers (p. 231, *SR5*).

Essence 0.1, Availability 4, Cost 1,000¥

Anarchy Shadow Amp: Amp level 1. Add one to a single die roll on a Matrix test.

BMW TROLLHAMMER

BMW revamped their meta-friendly classic, souping up the engine, pushing the front wheel slightly more forward, and giving it a more angular appearance. Most of the basics remain intact, though, from its low-slung seat to its throaty engine. It's not the most economical bike on the market, but sometimes you pay a premium to get something that feels like it fits you with no compromises.

BMW TROLLHAMMER

HAN	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARM	PILOT	SENS	SEATS	AVAIL	COST
4/3	4	2	10	8	1	2	1	—	12,500¥

Anarchy: Armor 8, Durability 10

FOLDING METACHAIR

Look, this is a luxury and probably unnecessary. But when you spend enough time going from place to place with chairs that don't fit you, or that threaten to break the moment you place any weight on them, you start to wish you just had a reliable chair you could bring with you anywhere. This is that chair. It compresses to a cylinder only slightly larger than your favorite soykaf thermos, but when assembled, it can hold an ork easily. Get the MaxiMetaChair, and it can hold a troll (though when compressed, it has twice the volume of the smaller version). The chair sets up within minutes—or faster, with the microbot-enabled self-assembly model. Do you want to make a statement that you will make a place for yourself in the world? Then set one of these up in whatever trog-unfriendly place you visit, and show that any place can be made to suit you.

MetaChair, basic: Availability —, Cost 50¥

MetaChair, self-assembly: Availability —, Cost 200¥

MaxiMetaChair, basic: Availability —, Cost 85¥

MaxiMetaChair, self-assembly: Availability —, Cost 235¥

Anarchy: Treat as gear.

FORD TITAN

As would be expected, the more purchasing power a certain group has, the more they are going to be marketed to. The Ford Titan is a variant on their Econovan with more headroom, a sturdier suspension, and larger seats. Humans, elves, and dwarfs may feel lost in the large interior, but orks and trolls love being able to get in without excessive bending, stooping, or folding. The loss of some seating capacity is, of course, a natural consequence of trying to make orks and trolls comfortable, and the van is longer than the Econ-

ovan. Some orks and trolls feel resentment at having one of the companies that treated them as an afterthought for so long suddenly acting like their ally, and they view any of their fellow trogs who drive the Titan as sell-outs. Others, though, can't resist the comfort and fit the van provides.

FORD TITAN

HAN	SPEED	ACCEL	BOD	ARM	PILOT	SENS	SEATS	AVAIL	COST
3/2	4	1	16	8	2	2	8	—	32,500¥

Anarchy: Armor 8, Durability 16

HORN COMPARTMENT

Similar to a tooth compartment (p. 452, *SR5*) but larger, the horn compartment gives a slick way to carry credsticks, RFID tags, or other small items. As with the tooth compartment, it can be equipped to remove the enclosed items with either a wireless signal or a hidden catch. Unlike the tooth compartment, it cannot be used for self-poisoning purposes, because of course it can't.

Essence —, Availability 8, Cost 1,000¥

Anarchy: Treat as gear.

OSMIUM MACE

There are all sorts of ways to make weapons more effective, but in the end, if you have a strong arm delivering the blow, all you really need in order to be effective is something with lots of mass and inertia that will pound a huge amount of force into the chest of whoever you're hitting. The club does this job pretty well, but if you have the arm strength for it, having extra weight at the end of the shaft can really get momentum swinging, delivering a huge payload of kinetic energy to the target. Enter the osmium mace, which some say is over the top in terms of its pain-delivering mass, while others say that's just the way they like it. Osmium is the most dense metal on earth, but its brittle nature makes it unsuitable for the construction of a weapon. It's just fine, though, for a ball on the interior of a mace head, especially when it is alloyed to make it more durable and then surrounded by a titanium shell to help diffuse some of the shock of impact away from the core. The result is a weapon that is difficult for the average person to lift up, let alone swing. When you get up to ork or troll levels of strength, you can deliver devastating blows that make you look like a character straight out of mythology.

OSMIUM MACE

ACC	REACH	DV	AP	AVAIL	COST
4*	2	(STR+4)P	–1	14R	5,500¥

*Accuracy decreases to 3 when wielded by someone with Strength of 4 or lower and increases to 5 when wielded by someone with Strength of 7 or higher.

DV changes to (STR+2)P when wielded by someone with Strength of 4 or lower and increases to (STR+6)P when wielded by someone with Strength of 7 or higher.

Anarchy Weapon: Close Combat, DV (STR/2 + 3), Close OK, Near —, Far —

REINFORCED ROPE

Normal and stealth rope typically hold 400 kilograms, which seems like more than enough for most metatypes, but put two trolls on a single rope—or even an ork and a troll—and you have trouble. Reinforced rope provides extra strength when you need to haul multiple trogs. Both the

standard and stealth variants hold up to 600 kilograms, while reinforced micro rope can hold 200 kilograms (which leaves trolls still out of luck, but it's at least something for orks!).

Reinforced standard rope: Availability 2, Cost 100¥ per 100 m

Reinforced stealth rope: Availability 12F, Cost 170¥ per 100 m

Reinforced microwire: Availability 8, Cost 100¥ per 100 m

Anarchy: Treat as gear.

ROCKBLOOD OLD SCHOOL LINE

This fashion line is designed to enhance the ork form, making it look both strong and elegant. Well-dressed orks across the globe are getting on board with Rockblood's fashion sense, making them feel like they don't have to look like other metatypes to be stylish. The clothing has an armor rating of 8 and increases the wearer's Social limit by 1. Capacity 10, Availability 8, Cost 1,900¥.

Anarchy: Armor value 9.

When used as Shadow Amp: Amp value 2. Armor value 9, add 1 to a single die on any Social test.

ROCKBLOOD SIGNATURE ARMORED SHIRT

This is an armored shirt specifically designed for trolls by the fashion designer known as Rockblood.

It makes trolls look both powerful and elegant, so that dermal deposits seem like a part of the clothing. The wearer receives +1 to both Etiquette and Intimidate tests while wearing the shirt—as long as they're a troll. It also has an Armor value of 6 and a Capacity of 4. Availability 14, Cost 800¥.

Anarchy: Armor value 6 (+1 skill point).

When used as Shadow Amp: Amp value 2. Armor value 6, may reroll 1 die on any Social test.

TROLL ROARER

This unusual implant takes advantage of the low frequencies of troll voices that go beyond anything emitted by other metatypes. The sounds are not audible to other metatypes. The roarer extends the distance by which the sound can be heard by 1 kilometer per point of Rating. Due to the nature of infrasound, trolls cannot shape full words when using the roarer, so it cannot be used to hold a conversation. It can be very useful, however, in allowing trolls to signal each other at range in a way that has low chance of detection or interference—unless, of course, the opposition has a troll on staff who hears the signal, too.

Ratings for the troll roarer range from 1 to 12

Availability: (Rating)R, Cost (50 x Rating)¥, Essence 0.1

Anarchy: Treat as gear.

YERZ KIT

Your vehicle is not simply a mode of transportation—it's a statement. And the thrust of that statement is that you are not to be ignored. Whether it's a nice set of rims, some accent lighting, a fancy paint job, or something else, you spend a little extra to make your vehicle very distinctly your own. This kit has items you need to make your vehicle fully yerzed out.

Availability: —, Cost 500¥

GEAR AVAILABILITY AND COSTS

ITEM	AVAILABILITY	COST
Antenna grill	4	1,000¥
BMW Trollhammer	—	12,500¥
Folding MetaChair		
Basic	—	50¥
Basic, self-assembly	—	200¥
Maxi, basic	—	85¥
Maxi, self-assembly	—	235¥
Ford Titan	—	32,500¥
Horn compartment	8	1,000¥
Osmium mace	14R	5,500¥
Reinforced standard rope	2	100¥ per 100m
Reinforced stealth rope	12F	170¥ per 100m
Reinforced microwire	8	100¥ per 100m
Rockblood Old School Line	8	1,900¥
Rockblood Signature Armored Shirt	14	800¥
Troll roarer	(Rating)R	(50 x Rating)¥
Yerz kit	—	500¥

QUALITIES

Here are some qualities to help make your ork or troll character the orkiest and trolliest possible.

POSITIVE QUALITIES

BLACK FOREST NATIVE

COST: 22 KARMA

You were born and raised in the Black Forest Troll Republic, and that has given you certain knowledge and benefits. You receive both the You Know a Guy and Street Politics variants of the Home Ground quality, and you may choose *one* of the following bonuses: a +2 bonus when casting the preferred spells of the Druidic tradition (Camouflage, Control Pack, Invisibility, Resist Pain, and Stunball), or +2 on Infiltration tests and Survival tests in wooded areas.

Anarchy: Choose one effect when this quality is selected: +2 dice on Sorcery tests or +2 dice on Survival tests.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

COST: 5 KARMA

The ork and troll community is not well-known for its wealth, but there are a number of trogs who have gained some money and are determined to use it to help others. Fortunately for you, you made contact with them and have become one of the beneficiaries. It didn't make you rich, but it's a nice boost. Ork and troll characters with this quaity can maintain a Squatter lifestyle for free, or a Low lifestyle for half the usual amount (making it 1,000 nuyen per month for orks, 2,000 for trolls).

Anarchy: Improve an existing Shadow Amp by a single level for free.

DELICATE FINGERS

COST: 5 KARMA; ONLY AVAILABLE TO TROLLS, INCLUDING TROLL VARIANTS

You've lived for a while as a troll in a human world, and you've gotten quite good at adapting. Plus, you have thinner-than-usual fingers and hands, which are good for using human-size devices and gear. You do not suffer the -2 penalty for using gear that is not adapted to your troll size (see **Using Unadapted Gear**, p. 420, *SR5*).

Anarchy: +1 die on Escape Artists tests and +1 die on Engineering tests.

HUMAN LIFESPAN

COST: 10 KARMA

This quality can only be taken at character creation. It replaces the ork's normal average lifespan with that of a human, so they age and mature at a human rate. It has no other effect on the character.

Anarchy: The effect is the same as the *SR5* variant.

NASTY TROG

COST: 5 KARMA

With sharpened horns and/or tusks, clothing worn to highlight dermal deposits, and so forth, you highlight your inherent trog characteristics in ways that make other metatypes nervous. You receive +3 to Intimidation tests against all non-orks and -trolls (a group that includes ork and troll variants).

Anarchy: +2 dice on Intimidation tests.

TROG ARTISAN

COST: 8 KARMA

Maybe you learned making things out of scraps in Seattle's Ork Underground. Or maybe you spent time in Sweetwater Creek, learning how to craft things for orks and trolls. You gain a +2 dice pool bonus whenever using the Artisan skill for items designed specifically for use by orks or trolls. Note that it must be made especially for orks or trolls, not just equally usable by them and other groups.

Anarchy: +2 dice on Engineering tests.

TROG HISTORIAN

COST: 4 KARMA

Whether through dedicated study of recorded history or long conversations with the people who were there, you have amassed a considerable body of knowledge of trog history. Whenever you are making a Knowledge Skill test that in some way involves a significant event in ork or troll history, you receive a +2 dice pool bonus.

Anarchy: Add 2 history-related Knowledge skills.

TROG LEADER

COST: 7 KARMA; ONLY AVAILABLE TO ORKS OR TROLLS, INCLUDING ORK AND TROLL VARIANTS

You say the right things, make the right gestures,

and your people respond. When making Leadership tests with any group entirely composed of orks and/or trolls, you receive a +2 dice pool bonus.

Anarchy: +1 die to Con tests, +1 die to Negotiation tests.

TROG NETWORKER

COST: 12 KARMA; ONLY AVAILABLE TO ORKS OR TROLLS, INCLUDING ORK AND TROLL VARIANTS

You are at one with your people. Wherever you go, once you are in predominantly ork or troll areas (whichever matches your particular metatype), you either find someone you know, or someone who knows someone you know, or someone who is eager to get to know you. When you are in neighborhoods that have a majority of your metatype, you get a +2 dice pool bonus on Etiquette tests, and you receive a +1 dice pool bonus on Navigation tests—because you either have a good feel for these areas, or you're skilled at finding the right people to give you quick directions.

Anarchy: +1 dice on Con tests, +1 to Survival tests.

NEGATIVE QUALITIES

BAD CREDIT

BONUS: 8 KARMA

Money has never flowed easily to you. You didn't have a network or friends and families with money who could help you out in hard times, and landlords and employers always seemed to take one look at you and rescind their offers, or make the terms much worse. In order to survive, you had to fall in with the type of lenders and financiers who charge scandalous interest rates and ruinous late fees. All that has resulted in black marks that seem to follow you wherever you go, no matter what names or SINs you use. Your lifestyle costs are 10 percent higher than they would otherwise be, and Availability for all pieces of gear is treated as 1 higher than it would otherwise be (note that this effect does not apply to gear purchased during the character creation process).

Anarchy: Whenever you receive 4 or more Karma for a mission, reduce that amount by 1.

ELEVATED STRESS

BONUS: 8 KARMA

Years of having mainstream society look down on you has taken its toll, as has the long-term stress associated with it. You take -1 dice pool penalty on any Addiction and Toxin Resistance tests due to the strain on your health system.

Anarchy: After you take any sort of damage, on your next three tests, add a Glitch Die that cannot roll any hits.

FORCE OF CHAOS

BONUS: 4 KARMA

Planning is great—for others. You prefer to throw yourself into whatever is happening and see what you can pull off, which makes you chafe against plans. Any bonuses you might receive from employing tactics or group maneuvers in combat are cut in half (rounded up).

Anarchy: When other players try to assist you on a test, the dice bonus you receive equals half the hits on their assist roll, rounded up.

TROG TRAITOR

BONUS KARMA: 5

Maybe you were a security executive in Renraku. Maybe you had some hints that the Mr. Johnson you were working for was funded by the Human Nation, but you decided to take the money and not ask too many questions. Whatever it was, other orks and trolls look at you with suspicion. Your Notoriety is considered to be 5 higher than its actual value when you are in ork- or troll-majority neighborhoods.

Anarchy: -2 dice on Con and Intimidation tests in ork- and troll-majority neighborhoods.

LIFE MODULES

The following modules are for use with the Life Module character creation system described on p. 65, *Run Faster*.

FORMATIVE YEARS

ORK/TROLL SLUM DWELLER

You didn't have much in the way of money, and you lived in a part of the sprawl where people tried to push you to the side and forget about you. You developed the ability to survive in difficult circumstances—and you also developed a pretty big chip on your shoulder.

ORK/TROLL SLUM DWELLER	
Attributes	Willpower +1, Intuition +1
Qualities	Trog Networker
Skills	Clubs +1, Perception +1, Sneaking +2, Survival (Urban) specialization, Unarmed Combat +1, Street Knowledge: [City] +3

BLACK FOREST BABY

You were born in the Black Forest Kingdom and saw it evolve to the Black Forest Troll Republic. You have been steeped in ork and troll ways, and given an optimistic view of troll and ork potential, because you have seen how well it can go when they control their own destiny.

BLACK FOREST BABY	
Attributes	Willpower +1, Logic +1
Qualities	Black Forest Native
Skills	Etiquette +1, Leadership +1, Longarms +1, Negotiation +1, Survival (Forests) specialization, Black Forest Government +1, Black Forest History +1, Black Forest People +1

TEEN YEARS

TROG GANGER

Strength is in numbers, weakness in isolation. In your formative years, you bound yourself to people who could help you survive the rough side of your city, including the people who wanted to see you impoverished, isolated, or even killed simply because of your horns and/or tusks. You lashed out, hitting the opposition the world aligned against you. Sometimes the world hit back, but you learned how to keep yourself standing.

TROG GANGER	
Attributes	Agility +1, Willpower +1
Qualities	Bad Rep (7), Nasty Trog
Skills	Close Combat skill group +2, Con +1, Escape Artist +1, First Aid +1, Gymnastics +1, Intimidation +1, Palming +1, Sneaking +1, Survival +1, Street Knowledge: [City] +1

SURVIVOR

There were many times when you were growing up that the world seemed determined to kill you. Sometimes, it took a slow tack, starving you out, while other times it went about its task more directly, with rocks, knives, and bullets rushing toward your head. Somehow, though, you made it through all that alive, thanks to your guile and cunning. The experience gave you wisdom you carry with you.

SURVIVOR	
Attributes	Body +1, Willpower +1, Intuition +1
Qualities	Bad Credit, Trog Networker
Skills	Blades +1, Clubs +1, Con +1, First Aid +1, Gymnastics +1, Running + 1, Sneaking +2, Survival +2, Swimming +1, Tracking +1, Street Knowledge: [City] +1

FURTHER EDUCATION

BILOXI TECHNICAL INSTITUTE (65 KARMA)

Biloxi Technical Institute is new, but not so new that it hasn't graduated some students, and you are honored to be among that number. You graduated with only a fine education, but also a strong sense of trog pride. And, of course, complete knowledge of every word of the newly penned school fight song.

BILOXI TECHNICAL INSTITUTE	
Attributes	Logic +1, Willpower +1
Qualities	Trog Historian
Skills	Computer +1, Perception +1, Etiquette +1, Academic Knowledge [Any] +2
Computer Science	Cybercombat +1, Electronics skill group +1, Hacking +1, Academic Knowledge: Hardware Design +2
Engineering	Chemistry +1, Hardware +1, Industrial Mechanic +1, Academic Knowledge: Engineering +4

REAL LIFE

TROG PROFESSIONAL

You spent day after day telling yourself that there were worse ways to live. After all, you had a roof over your head and you knew where your meals would be coming from. And you weren't just some low-level grunt—you had authority over some people, even though there were plenty of people who had authority over you. You withstood sideways glances and muttered remarks that your co-workers hoped you would not hear, and several promotions you earned but did not get, because something about you wasn't right for the job. It wasn't so bad, you kept telling yourself—but you felt like a huge burden was relieved the day you threw it all away to find something else.

TROG PROFESSIONAL	
Attributes	Logic +1, Intuition +1
Qualities	Limited Corporate SIN (15)
Skills	Computer +1, Firearms skill group +2, Etiquette +1, Hardware +1, Instruction +1, Leadership +1, Medicine +1, Perception +1, Pilot Ground Craft +1, Software +1, Corporate Procedures +3

TROG REBEL

You live in a world that wants to control you, wants to berate you, wants to tell you all the things you are not so you remain in your place. You don't just reject those ideas—you throw them angrily in the face of the world. Maybe you fell in with a group such as the Sons of Sauron, or maybe you acted on your own, but either way you spent plenty of time blowing up what pieces of the establishment you could, and bringing pain where you believed it was deserved. Some call you a hero, some a criminal, some a terrorist. You just feel like you did the only thing you could.

TROG REBEL	
Attributes	Willpower +1, Intuition +1
Qualities	Force of Chaos, Nasty Trog
Skills	Con +1, Demolitions +1, Escape Artist +1, Firearms skill group +2, Gymnastics +1, Perception +1, Sneaking +2, Survival +1, Tracking +1, Covert Tactics +3

RESTRICTED AREA
KEEP OUT
FIN

BIG, BAD, AND AWESOME

They can call you a trog. Sure they can. Let 'em think it's smear. Let them show you what they don't know. Let them ignore history, the great accomplishments orks and trolls have made in every field in the Sixth World, the homes and enclaves they've built out of nothing. There's enough talent in the trog population to punch, hack, rig, charm, or enchant that smug smile right off their face. You know what you are. They'll learn—fast, if they know what's good for them.

The Complete Trog is the definitive guide for ork and troll characters in *Shadowrun*. With information on what it's like to be an ork or troll in dozens of spots across the globe, details on working in corps as a trog (including in ork- and troll-dominated corps) and the heroes and enemies of trog culture, the book helps players add flavor and depth to their characters and the world around them. On top of that, it has gear, qualities, and life modules compatible with both *Shadowrun, Fifth Edition* and *Shadowrun: Anarchy*. Plunge into the rich culture of trogs and watch them turn that slur on its head.

SHADOWRUN
FIFTH EDITION

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